Scribner's
MAGAZINE

March, 1939
Vol. 105, No. 3

Our April cover is by James Chapin; in some respects it is the most startling cover we have published . . . The "Scribner's Examines" article in the April issue is on a highly influential airplane designer; Russell Owen is the writer . . . Other April high spots include a thorough examination of the government publicity machine by Charles R. Walker and a remarkable photo-text feature on American privacy . . . Also another prize-winning "Life in the United States" article and a SCRIBNER'S Short Novel by Millen Brand, who wrote *The Outward Room* . . . Plus our "Life in the U. S. . . . Photographic," with the lenses turned on the State of Mississippi . . . And other features and departments, including "The Scribner Quiz" and our book department, which is receiving great applause . . . NOTE: In April we expect to announce plans for our 1939 series on magazines.

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Cover Painting by PETER HURD
Courtesy of the gallery of Mrs. Cornelius J. Sullivan

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THE LAND OF ENCHANTMENT

PACKS EVERY VACATION DAY FULL OF NEW EXPERIENCES

DID you know that in New Mexico you'll find the great underground Carlsbad Caverns National Park . . . and eight National Monuments besides? Eighteen Indian Pueblos and four enormous reservations? Mountain peaks more than two miles high and eight million acres of cool green National Forests . . . crystal trout streams as well as huge storage dams and lakes? Big cattle ranches and quaint towns where the real West still lingers? Ancient Mission Churches . . . and historic relics without number, dating back as early as 1540? No wonder world travelers call it the Land of Enchantment! Send for this free booklet . . . and plan to see New Mexico this summer.

NEW MEXICO STATE TOURIST BUREAU

New Mexico State Tourist Bureau,
Room 599, State Capitol,
Santa Fe, New Mexico.

Gentlemen: Please send your free booklet "Two Weeks in New Mexico" and 1939 Road Map to:

Name.....

Address.....

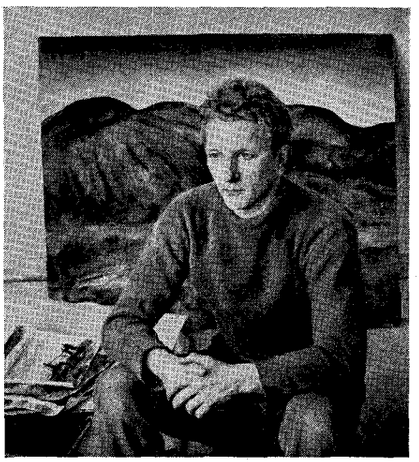
.....

STRAWS IN THE WIND

Cowhand (*See Cover*)

José Herrera, part Mexican, part Apache, is a bronco buster. Traveling from ranch to ranch in New Mexico, he subdues about forty wild horses a year, at five dollars a head. Most of the time he lives on the ranch of Peter Hurd, who did this portrait of him. A few months ago he got married—with Hurd as best man—and brought his wife to the adobe house in the background of the picture.

The artist came in to see us, wearing a wide-brimmed hat, sack suit, and riding boots. He is a native of New Mexico, born there in 1904. He went to West Point, where he became interested in painting and made his first sale to a tactical officer for $10. After two years he left, but promised his father he would finish his education somewhere. He went to Haverford College, met the artist



Peter Hurd

N. C. Wyeth, who took him on as a pupil and persuaded his father not to make an issue of it.

In 1929 Hurd married Wyeth's daughter and returned to New Mexico with her. She, too, is an artist—did the portrait reproduced on this page.

Their fifty-eight-acre fruit ranch pays its way and gives them time to paint. Hurd works almost entirely in egg tempora, a medium he finds especially suited to the coloring of the Southwestern scene. He has recently won commissions to do mural panels for a post office in Big Spring, Texas, and another Federal building in Dallas. Two years ago he won first prize in the Chicago International Water Color Show. Another distinction in the field of art came to him when a WPA sculptor asked him to pose for a bust of Billy the Kid. Old-timers down in New Mexico had sworn he was a dead ringer for the desperado.

For Men Only

From Irving Tressler we have a little 10-point quiz, which he jotted down on his way to see us a few days before New Year's. We pass it along to our male readers and hereby resolve that we will get Mr. Tressler to concoct a similar quiz for the women who read SCRIBNER'S.

1. What's the license-plate number of your car?
2. How many buttons are there on the front of the shirt you're wearing?
3. What is the exact amount of your salary each month before deductions for social security, etc.?
4. What size gloves do you wear?
5. How much do you have on deposit in the bank—within $10?
6. How much in life-insurance premiums do you pay out each year?
7. What size sock do you wear?
8. How much do you weigh, and what should your weight be for your height?
9. What size shirt do you wear—collar size and sleeve length?
10. What is the length of your bedstead—within three inches?

Four Out of Six

Semiannual report on SCRIBNER'S Short Novels (the seventh begins on page 20):

Three of the first six released in book-length version; a fourth, Dorothy Canfield's *Seasoned Timber,* scheduled to reach bookstalls about time this issue hits newsstands; critics' remarks:

What's in It for Me?, by Jerome Weidman. "Mr. Weidman writes it well, mercilessly, with great skill and speed and hardness."—N. Y. *Herald Tribune, Books.*

To the Market Place, by Berry Fleming. "One of the most interesting and intelligent novels that has appeared in a long while."—N. Y. *Herald Tribune, Books.*

A Stranger Came to Port, by Max Miller. "If it's an interesting book you're

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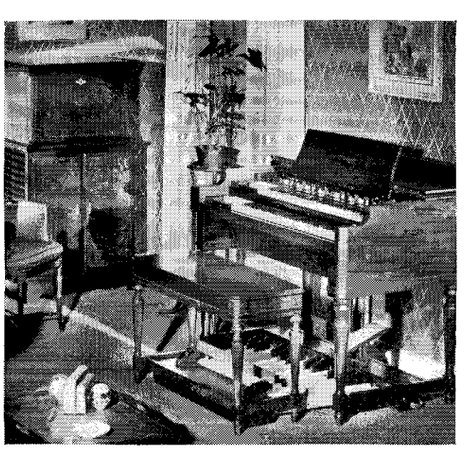
Music is no longer just "SOMETHING TO BE LISTENED TO" in hundreds of American homes



EVEN IN SMALL LIVING ROOMS, *the Hammond fits in gracefully. Using no pipes or reeds, it creates its lovely, varied tones by electrical impulses. Is ready to play when connected to an ordinary electric outlet.*

With a Hammond Organ in the home, every member of your family will find a livelier interest in creating music himself

PEOPLE of all ages, when they hear the lovely, varied tones of the Hammond Organ, seem to experience the same urge to sit right down at the console and *play* it themselves. That's why, in so many hundreds of American living rooms, Hammond Organs are bringing whole families a delight in music that goes far beyond just *listening* to radio or records.

With a Hammond in the home, men and women find that long-forgotten music lessons now begin to pay new dividends of pleasure. Children develop a deeper appreciation of music—a lifelong source of enjoyment.

No larger than a writing desk and no more expensive than a fine piano, the Hammond is entirely practical for small rooms, moderate incomes. Let your nearest dealer demonstrate how easy it would be for *your* family to play and enjoy this "orchestra in a four-foot square"; let him explain how small a down-payment would put a Hammond in your home. Or write The Hammond Instrument Co., 2989 N. Western Ave., Chicago, Ill. *In Canada* address Northern Electric Company, Ltd., Montreal.

THE HAMMOND ORGAN

ON THE NEW AEOLIAN-HAMMOND PLAYER ORGAN, anyone can play the world's greatest organ music. See and hear it at your Hammond dealer's. A complete library of rolls is available.

USED IN OVER 2000 CHURCHES. THE APPROPRIATE GIFT FOR YOUR CHURCH OR SCHOOL

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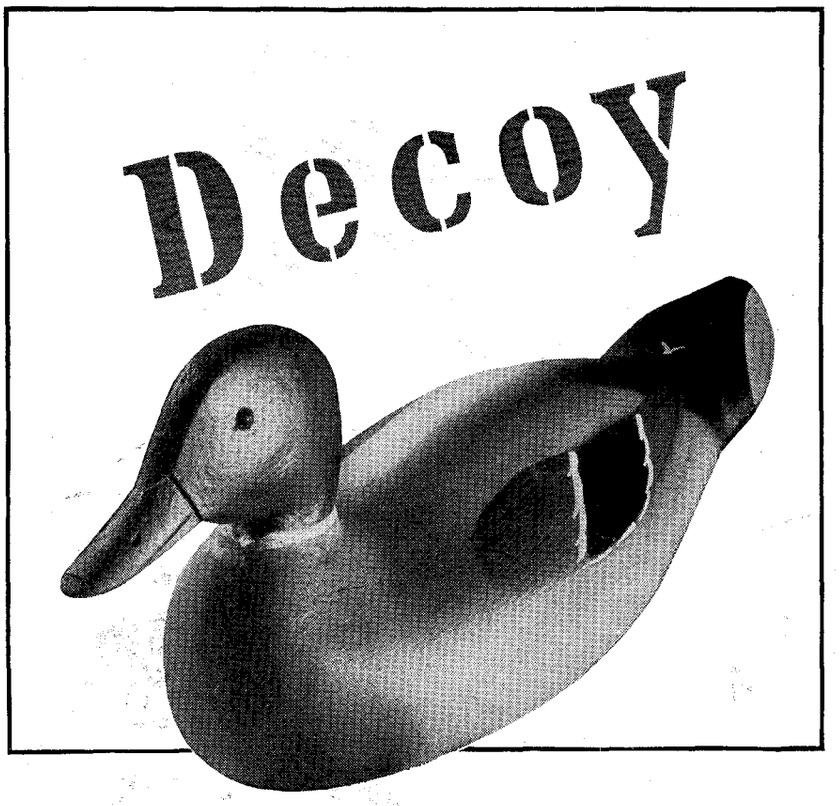

LURE them in — that's the decoy's job. But reliable manufacturers contemplating plant relocation or expansion are wary of decoys in the form of free moving expenses, tax exemptions, free buildings and sweat shop labor.

New Jersey *does not want* marginal producers. The State thinks too much of its existing industry to burden it with the added expenses of outside demands for special inducements.

New Jersey *does want* industry that should logically and can profitably locate here. Industry that can pay a fair wage to intelligent labor. Industry that appreciates a friendly attitude from both government and labor. Industry that is willing to pay a fair share of fair taxes. In fact — and this is important — New Jersey's fair taxes are a big reason why in the past six months 499 industries have started business operations in the State.

New Jersey levies no personal income tax. No corporation income tax. No corporate excise tax and no sales tax. Property tax assessments are made locally. Business and local governments meet on a common ground.

New Jersey is a great place for industry. We invite you to learn more about this State that believes as industry thrives, the State and its people will prosper. The New Jersey Council is dedicated to the purpose of seeing that industry does prosper. Ask your secretary to write for your copy of "New Industrial Digest of New Jersey." Address Dept. S5, New Jersey Council, State House, Trenton, N. J.

RECREATION · EDUCATION · COMMERCE · AGRICULTURE · RESIDENTIAL · INDUSTRY
NEW JERSEY COUNCIL
CREATED TO PROMOTE THE ADVANTAGES OF THE STATE

NEW JERSEY

A GOOD PLACE TO WORK . . . TO LIVE . . . TO PLAY

looking for, you can't miss this one."—N. Y. *Sun.*

3000 Novelists

Already we have received more than three thousand inquiries about the Random House—Scribner's Magazine $4000 Short Novel Competition (see page 51). This response is much larger than expected, and we hope to purchase a number of Short Novels in addition to the prize winners.

1936-7-8-9

Our advertising department has supplied us with some figures which should warm the hearts of our statistically minded friends. These figures are on SCRIBNER'S net advertising revenue, and they show the following:

1. A March, 1939, gain of 29.5 per cent over March, 1938.
2. A first quarter, 1939 (January, February, and March issues), gain of 20.1 per cent over first quarter, 1938.
3. A first quarter, 1939, gain of 76.3 per cent over the first quarter of 1937.
4. A first quarter, 1939, gain of 460.0 per cent over the first quarter of 1936.

In an attempt to simplify this, we have deduced the following: for every dollar in advertising carried by SCRIBNER'S in the first quarter of 1936, we carried $3.17 in 1937, $4.77 in 1938, and $5.60 in 1939.

Californian

Frank J. Taylor, who wrote "Hollywood, Calif., Mar. 1.—," comes to SCRIBNER'S with a journalistic background of fabulous proportions. Here's his record for the past twenty-odd years: reporter for the Los Angeles *Examiner,* San Francisco *Examiner,* and San Francisco bureau of the Associated Press; war correspondent for the United Press, covering revolutions in Germany, Austria, Hungary, Czechoslovakia, and Russia; postwar work in New York and Washington bureaus of U.P.; Washington correspondent for New York *Globe;* two years in charge of Scripps-Howard Washington bureau; five years as advertising copy writer in San Francisco. That takes him up to 1934. Since then, he has been writing for magazines, his articles appearing frequently in the *Post, Reader's Digest, Collier's, American,* and *Country Gentleman.*

Notes

Milton Mackaye's last "Scribner's Examines" was on Westbrook Pegler. . . . Gilbert Burck, an editor of *Railroad,* made his SCRIBNER'S debut last fall with "The Great Speedup."

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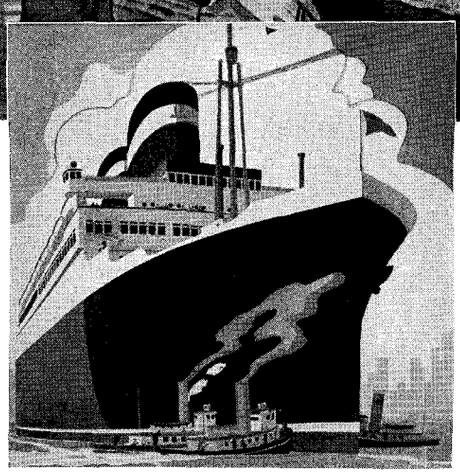
3000 Miles of ENJOYMENT

(And Outstanding Value, Too—On America's Finest Liners Direct to All Europe)



After-dinner coffee served in the wood-panelled smoking room. The huge fireplace spreads a warm, friendly glow.

The ***Manhattan*** and ***Washington*** are a remarkable "buy"—you appreciate that as soon as you have set foot in your stateroom, or enjoyed the world-famous cuisine. And adding still more to your enjoyment on board is the friendly hospitality of these ships . . . the sheer "skill" reflected in every detail of service and entertainment. No wonder that again in 1938, they were two of the most popular liners afloat.

Rates are now at their "off" season low. Cabin Class, $186 up; Tourist, $127 up. Weekly sailings direct to Ireland, England, France and Germany alternating with the *Pres. Harding* and *Pres. Roosevelt*—Cabin, $141 up.

Ask your Travel Agent for complete details

U.S. Lines

ONE BROADWAY, NEW YORK CITY

216 N. Michigan Ave., Chicago; 665 Market St., San Francisco

19 King St. East, Toronto. *Offices in other principal cities.*

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Seventy million times a day the public tests the quality of Bell System service. The measure of this service is not only its promptness, reliability and low cost. It is also the courtesy with which it is given.

Our genuine desire is to make the Bell System a friendly and helpful institution . . . and to give you the best, the most and the cheapest telephone service in the world.

BELL TELEPHONE SYSTEM

You are cordially invited to visit the Bell System exhibit at the New York World's Fair

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Scribner's
MAGAZINE
Volume 105, Number 3 March, 1939

Clare Boothe

BY MILTON MACKAYE

SCRIBNER'S EXAMINES *a playwright... a woman with three careers... her rise from Riverside Drive to the Waldorf Towers... her wit, possessions, influence, and technique*

CLARE BOOTHE is the glamour girl of letters, the most beautiful living playwright. Such ugly ducklings as Maxwell Anderson, George Kaufman, and the bespectacled Thornton Wilder have a certain facility with words, but not one of them would draw more than polite disinterest in the Easter parade or cause heads to turn if they marched into the Colony Club for lunch. Literary people, unfortunately, have a way of being rugged and angular and of failing to wash behind the ears; Miss Boothe's face saves the face of the craft.

But Miss Boothe is more than a decoration to the arts; she is the heroine of her own success story. Only now in

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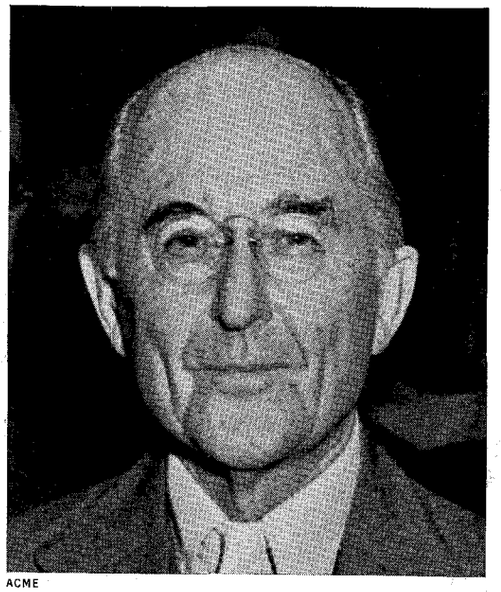
her middle thirties, she has had three careers for herself and has moved glitteringly through them all. She has achieved marriage (twice), motherhood, money, social position, and fame—and she wrested them from life with her own white and neurotic hands.

Today she is the master blueprint of that legendary figure, the completely smart woman. No one has ever seen her other than perfectly dressed, she knows every celebrity worth knowing, she lunches and dines at the right places (upstairs at Twenty One instead of downstairs with *hoi polloi*), she has made important enemies, and Elsa Max-

ACME

The young Clare Boothe met Mrs. O. H. P. Belmont on shipboard and gained a sponsor



ACME

At a party, Condé Nast was polite to Miss Boothe. Next day she was working for him

well's parties never seem quite complete without her. Miss Boothe's possessions alone are enough to make her the envy of any woman in her right mind. She has a house near Greenwich, Connecticut, a tremendous apartment at the Waldorf Towers in New York, a plantation at Moncks Corners, South Carolina. She has Brace, the finest butler in the world. She has also a completely eligible husband, the ambitious and wealthy Henry R. Luce, editor and major stockholder of *Life, Time,* and *Fortune* magazines. Indeed, Miss Boothe is so much a success, so efficient an achievement as a personality, that many ordinary people find in her a curiously unreal and fictional quality.

There is nothing unreal about her achievement in the theater; adding machines don't lie. Beginning as a polished and plausible amateur, she emerged into professionalism with a cannonade of popping opera hats and a swish of ermine and mink. Her first produced play was a failure, but on December 26, 1936, that apotheosis of the poison pen, *The Women,* moved into the Ethel Barrymore Theater.

The Women ran for 657 performances in New York, making a fortune for producer and author. (Miss Boothe, however, thinking her private income sufficient to her own needs, turned over her first six months' royalties to the Dramatists' Guild.) Only fifteen plays in the history of Broadway have had a longer run. A touring company has been on the road for two years. It was produced in Vienna and Budapest, and the surprised French, who do not understand our divorce technique, are now watching it in Paris. London did not see it; the Lord Chamberlain wanted to make too many changes in the script to fortify the institution of marriage. Hollywood bought the play but laid it on the shelf when someone finally discovered there were no men in the cast.

Kiss the Boys Goodbye, the latest charade in which Miss Boothe lays about her with a polite meat ax, opened at the Henry Miller Theater on November 7, 1938. Superficially a travesty of Hollywood's fantastic search for a red-hot cutie to play the rôle of Scarlett O'Hara, it is actually a slanderous attack on the sophisticated circles to which the playwright herself belongs. Every seat in the theater has been sold since the opening. The play's Chicago opening early this year was equally brilliant, and there is talk now of showing it in the South before Hollywood releases *Gone With the Wind.*

That Miss Boothe came to the theater from refined purlieus probably gives an extra savor, so far as her audiences are concerned, to the outrageous chitchat of the vixens and social lepers who populate her stages. They are brassy and vulgar, and she is very waspish about them. Or it may be that there is some woozy and mystical social significance in the popularity of her plays. For despite her immediate fancy background and a deeply ingrained snobbery, Miss Boothe is another of those unfathomable traitors to her economic class. She writes of the rich and for the rich—but she always gives them hell.

II

DATA on Clare Boothe's beginnings is somewhat meager. She was born on Riverside Drive in New York some thirty-six years ago, and her childhood was not an affluent one. She lived in Memphis, where her father operated a soft-drink factory, in Chicago, and in Greenwich, Connecticut. She was a precocious youngster who early searched her soul and decided that destiny wanted her for a sunbeam.

The playwright herself is authority for the history of her first essay at a career. Riverside Drive was just across the river from Fort Lee, where the infant motion-picture industry was plucking at its pinafores. Biograph had de-

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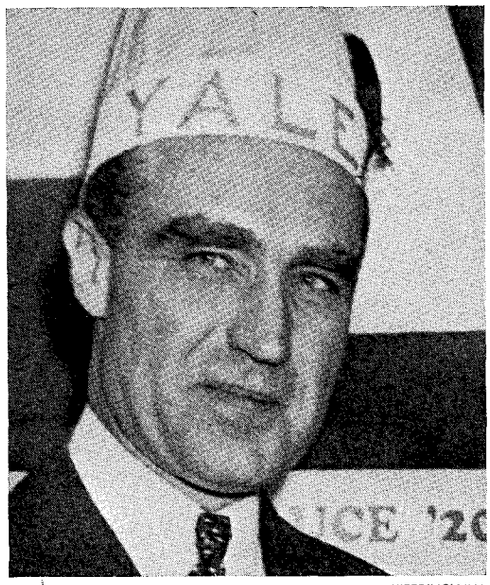
cided to immortalize the drama of an orphanage, and sent out a call for poor little orphans. Clare's parents, conscious of their offspring's mop of yellow sausage curls, agreed that she had the makings of a pocket Bernhardt. Movie tests, then as now, were odd affairs. At the count of ten, Clare was to shift, in company with Viola Dana, the star, from a worried expression into one of dawning fear. At twenty, they were to show fright and, at thirty, horror. The camera clicked, and Viola Dana began to click too. Her eyes dilated, her lips trembled, and the undiscovered child wonder became not an actress but an audience. "I watched her with open mouth," Miss Boothe reports, "and to call it by its proper name a very, very dead pan. My screen career was over."

Several years later Clare's mother divorced her first husband and married Dr. A. E. Austin, health officer and banker, and Clare went to Greenwich to live. At ten, she was regarded by amiable neighbors as a prodigy, and it was at ten that she wrote her first play, painted the scenery, sewed the costumes, and ruthlessly stole a theater. Originally the show was to have been staged in the drawing room of the Austin home, but what with a cast of twenty children and unwieldy sets, the production got out of hand. There was only one stage in town, and that was in the high school closed for the summer. Clare induced a smitten boy to crawl through a window and unlatch the front door. The next evening the play was produced. It earned thirty dollars—considerably more than Al Woods made from Miss Boothe's first Broadway production.



INTERNATIONAL

When Henry Luce first met Miss Boothe, they argued fiercely. Two years later, they married

KARGER-PIX

After one producer rejected Kiss the Boys Goodbye, *Brock Pemberton made it a hit*

Clare attended Miss Castle's School in Tarrytown, and several other institutions ("I really had no education at all," she confesses), but in her teens she never lost sight of the glamorous career that was to be hers. There were two outstanding events during this period: she wrote a cycle of poems about Woodrow Wilson, and she ran away from home. She got a job with the Dennison Company, paper manufacturers in New York, and spent two months making paper flowers, cups, etc. This experience cured her of proletarian leanings; she found she didn't like a working girl's life. A convenient appendectomy permitted her to return home without loss of prestige.

Clare Boothe has frequently denied that luck played any part in advancing her fortunes. But if it was not lucky, certainly it was fortuitous that on a boat, returning from Europe with her mother, she met Mrs. O. H. P. Belmont. Mrs. Belmont was delighted with her precocious intelligence and became her firm friend and sponsor. The energetic dowager was a leader in the suffrage fight and she immediately fastened upon the youngster as an articulate Joan of Arc who could carry the evangelistic message of equal rights to the women of America.

The attachment between the two lasted for several years, and it was at Mrs. Belmont's Long Island home that the ethereal young beauty from Greenwich met her first husband, George Tuttle Brokaw. Brokaw was a descendant of a family prominent in New York society since the Revolution; his wealth was inherited from his father, Isaac Vail Brokaw of the clothing firm of Brokaw Brothers. Ann C. Booth, twenty (the records do not show just when she added a final "e" to her name), and George Tuttle Brokaw, forty-three, were married on August 10, 1923. According to the newspapers, twenty-five hundred people attended the wedding reception. There was no dancing, since nationwide mourning for the death of President Harding was in progress.

Marriage inducted Miss Boothe into the *Social Register,* and she went to live at the gloomy and imposing Brokaw mansion at 1 East Seventy-ninth Street. There her daughter was born. Miss Boothe seldom discusses this period of her life, but newspaper files provide a bird's-eye view of what a personable young matron does with her time.

On January 27, 1926, the newspaper cameras caught her in the costume of Madame de Montespan at the Beaux Arts Ball. In February she was photographed in a white silk wig all ready for the Pre-Lenten Bal Masque at Philadelphia. The caption beneath another studio portrait of Mrs. George Tuttle Brokaw announces that, as executive chairman of the Inez Milholland Memorial Masque Committee, she was arranging benefit mah-jongg and bridge tournaments at the Biltmore Hotel.

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Miss Boothe makes no bones about the fact that her first marriage was an unhappy one. In 1929 she went to Reno and obtained a divorce. A settlement of $425,000 made her financially independent, and she returned to New York to encourage, in a white and modernistic penthouse apartment of her own, those intellectual and artistic ambitions which apparently had lain almost fallow during her career as a matron among the elect.

First of all (such was the custom of the time) she went to see a psychoanalyst. He promised, she remembers, to shuck off her psychic angularities and make her a happy woman again. In the midst of a series of seances with the professor, she abruptly diagnosed her own case—what she needed was a job. At a dinner party she met Condé Nast, publisher then of *Vogue* and *Vanity Fair,* and promptly applied for work. Nast, familiar with the literary yearnings of the rich, vaguely and hypocritically suggested that she come to see him—and dismissed the matter from his mind. The next day she appeared at the offices of *Vogue,* picked out a desk and announced that she had been hired. Shortly afterward she was transferred to the ailing but viable *Vanity Fair,* where in 1931, using the name Clare Boothe Brokaw, she became an associate editor. Writing captions and editing copy did not satisfy her. There is a story that she submitted her first article anonymously and that not until it was accepted did she acknowledge authorship. This is typical of Miss Boothe. She is never humble, but she is uncertain about her work and acutely self-conscious. She can't be sure she is right until the audience applauds.

ACME

Margalo Gilmore played Mary Haines in The Women—*the only "nice" character in the play*

ACME

Cecil Beaton, who knew Miss Boothe on Vanity Fair, *called her "drenchingly beautiful"*

Her subsequent career on *Vanity Fair* was that of a bright and absorbent opportunist. She was quick and shrewd, early learned her way around in snob journalism, had a nice taste in wisecracks. Here is one compatriot's remembrance of those halcyon days: "Every Wednesday there was a staff luncheon in the office. What I chiefly recall about them is the terrible coffee, brewed out of old stockings and stone cold by the time it arrived on the nineteenth floor, but I also remember that Mrs. Brokaw apparently subsisted wholly on melba toast, fruit salads, and such, thus making all the other women feel like harvest hands. There used to be minor current celebrities at lunch lured by Frank Crowninshield, Nast, or sometimes Edna Chase [editor of *Vogue*], but no matter who brought them they always, if they were men, devoted all their attention to Clare, as who wouldn't."

In 1932 she became managing editor, and it is the opinion of some of those who worked with her that she kept *Vanity Fair* alive long after its arteries had hardened. She had amazing energy, and in spite of her delicate and languorous look, steamed with vitality. One fellow worker still believes, perhaps too enthusiastically, that she is the greatest woman executive in the world. "She could run Macy's store, Sears Roebuck, or," he said, "with a six months' apprenticeship, Republic Steel."

As Miss Boothe is now the most beautiful playwright, then she was the most beautiful magazine editor. Smart, well-dressed, relentlessly ambitious, she extended her mental horizons by a process of calculated osmosis; she filled her apartment evenings with artists and writers and so-called intellectuals. Subsequently the temper of the country changed, and, sensitive as mercury in a thermometer, Miss Boothe forsook the professional literati for public men and politicians. Bernard Baruch became one of her intimates, and then General Hugh Johnson. This transferred loyalty was mirrored in her pieces. From such subjects as "Bachelors Do Not Marry" and "Mary Pickford, the End of an Era," she shifted her interests to such stuff as "Capitalism on Trial." With the advent of NRA she became one of the public's representatives on the Theater Code. It was her first and only public office.

In 1934 she left *Vanity Fair.* The penumbra of legend which seems to surround all her activities was not missing on this occasion. The highly unlikely tale was circulated that she and publisher Nast had separated because she had planned a stock coup which would have given her managing control of the Nast enterprises.

III

Miss Boothe attributes her invasion of Broadway to a perverse exhibitionism common to many people—when

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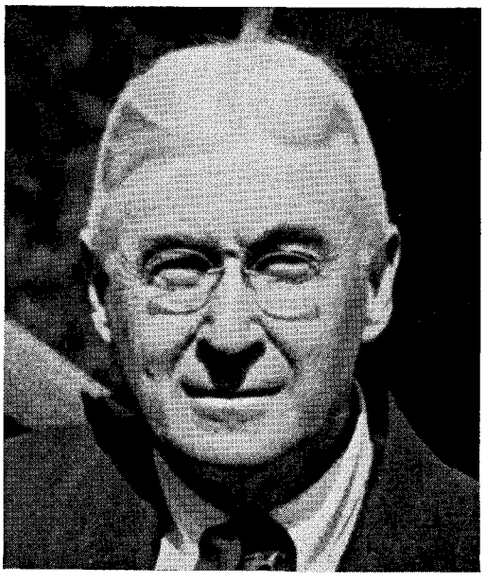
their competence in one field is established, they burn with desire to become luminaries in another. The truth is, of course, that she long was a theater buff, going so far on one disillusioning occasion as to attend briefly a school of acting. There were several plays in her trunk before she had her first production. In 1927 she collaborated with an Englishman, whose name she has long since forgotten, on a farce called *Entirely Irregular*. No one liked it except a young man named Reuben Mamoulian who was then a director for the Theater Guild. Then she and Paul Gallico wrote a comedy called *Sacred Cow*. It got nowhere. The next effort was *O Pyramids!*, a satire on the NRA. The year was 1933, and every manager in town was wary.

LUCAS & PRITCHARD

Helen Claire stars in Kiss the Boys Goodbye—*a satire on the movies' search for Scarlett*



INTERNATIONAL

Bernard Baruch, a friend of Miss Boothe's and owner of a neighboring home in Carolina

Abide With Me was produced in November of 1935. It was a dank melodrama about a young girl who married a sadistic and drunken older man and went to live in a gloomy New York mansion. It was pretentious and confused and a resounding failure. Then, with *The Women,* came the end of the long drought. *The Women* grew out of a clever but gimcrack idea and is in essence nothing more than a super-vaudeville show. It is not even laid out in acts; Miss Boothe borrowed from the smoker revues what is known as the black-out technique. *Kiss the Boys Goodbye* is another adventure into artificiality based on an idea so slight that Max Gordon, producer of the earlier success, hesitated to produce it. He hesitated too long; this was a stroke of luck for Brock Pemberton. He got next look at the script for the purely fortuitous reason that Miss Boothe had served with him on the NRA. Pemberton thought he could wrestle a show out of it, and he did.

Miss Boothe regards these two successes as "mere finger exercises" (her own words). And there is a third in prospect, called *Wedding Day,* which she was writing when she decided if *Kiss the Boys Goodbye* were to be done it must be done quickly. When this manuscript is washed up Miss Boothe thinks she will be able to attack a serious play she has been turning over in her mind for several years.

It is difficult to catalogue Clare Boothe's position in the theater. Her people are caricatures, and she seems to be singularly lacking in invention and story sense. But her undeviating malice, the snap and brutality of her dialogue, anesthetize an urbane audience to the frailties of her art. Shock sets the customers back in their seats and makes the laughs come easy.

Several critics in an attempt at scholastic identification have compared the Boothe pyrotechnics to the work of such Restoration bravos as Congreve, Farquhar, and Wycherley, and the comparison is not entirely idle. There is the same aridity of emotion, the same scabrous comedy of manners, the same outrageous cartooning of both sense and folly. Miss Boothe turns the trick, too, of writing plays without presenting a single important character with whom she sympathizes. Mary Haines of *The Women* was a good woman, but her creator admits that she regarded Mary as a fathead.

I have no spies to report on Miss Boothe's career as a young society matron, but she made a rosary of her slights and injuries and has been counting her beads publicly ever since. Painful though those years may have been, they provided her with a bagful of copy which she has not exhausted yet. She first turned and bit Park Avenue and Newport in 1931, when *Stuffed Shirts,* described as a satirical novel of society, was published. It was not particularly successful, but re-read at this late date there are sections which stand up surprisingly well. An extravagant report on the boom era, it is a sort of American cousin to Evelyn Waugh's *Vile Bodies*. But it is as a source book that this volume is most interesting, for here, disguised only by different names, are many of the characters who were later to be resurrected in grease paint.

Miss Boothe's success at the box office is undoubtedly due in part to Park Avenue's belief that her characters are malicious portraits of members of the smart set. The ladies and gentlemen who make up the carriage trade rush into their pearls and broadcloth in the hope that they may recognize their friends among the folk she roasts upon the spit. As a matter of fact, these delighted identifications—for they do make identifications—are usually spurious. Miss Boothe will admit to modeling from life on only one occasion. The radical columnist in *Kiss the Boys Goodbye* is unmistakably a (*continued on page* 49)

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"Big Broadcast of 1938"

ANONYMOUS

BACKSTAGE *with a small-town woman who finds herself speaking over a national network... the frantic preparations, the confusion and fear... a Life in the U.S. article*

DID you ever wonder what it would be like to "go on the air"? Not in a song-and-dance skit. But to be interviewed. One of those humble little people who have been, done, or represent something—something not portentous in itself, but having a certain significance for the program on which it appears. Magnus Manson of Wahaloo, Washington, champion woodchopper of the Yakima Valley! Charlie Chum, prize 4H Club boy of Kankakee, Kansas! Mrs. Minnie Murdock, mother of "Feisty" Murdock, fighting fullback of the latest All-America eleven! Frequently nowadays you dial them in. Or maybe you merely yawn and dial them out. As I did, before I became one of that questionably honored guild, interviewed in a Middle-to-Far-West-Coast program over the air.

Considering my thirteen-year rôle of small-town wife, mother, and community contributor, the whole preceding week had had a strangely maleficent quality. On Monday, inexplicably attracted, in a near-by city department store, to a camel's-hair coat of deep and utterly luscious cranberry red, I had suddenly thrust my arms into its satin-smooth depths, and handed over bills which were to have purchased shoes and sheets for three—pants, a shirt, and bathrobe for one. And so I wound up for the first time in thirteen years with a garment casually purchased, one which for purposes of either warmth or respectability I did not actually need.

Then that night, confronted at the local library desk by the aberrated female past whom I, as book-committee member, have attempted for years to slip occasional volumes of really good reading matter, came the old and hackneyed plaint: "Oh, Mrs. Swingert! There's a book here we'll want off, I know. It's—ah—in the beginning a woman has [lowered voice] ah—a baby. And there's quite a bit of—ah—sex, from then on."

"So? Well, isn't there everywhere?"

We both jumped. Miss Miland had been no more shocked than I at the absence of my customary acquiescent murmur.

It was the next morning that I went to the mailbox and drew forth a thin, crisp sheet which finished:

". . . And so, Mrs. Swingert, we trust that you will be able to be with us here at NBC in Chicago on the evening of April 23rd . . . to appear on the Family Fun Program sponsored by Farnham and Farnham Tractor Company—in a three-minute interview conducted by Ward Barnes—details of the interview to be satisfactory to you and worked out after you arrive."

"Of course," said the editor of our local paper (I happen to live with him—legally), "you're going to do it."

"Of course *not*." I sighed. "It's tacky stuff—these farm-program interviews. You know the type. Hillbilly music and Uncle Josh Wiggins. Not that I wouldn't like to be adviser for a *real* rural-pointed program. Good music, up-to-the-minute farm news, interviews with really interesting people."

"But that sort of thing," said the editor, "may be just what this Farnham thing is—or trying to be. Wasn't it *that* program Saturday night? You remember the boy who shot the Colorado River—he was interesting as the dickens. And that music was good!"

The editor was definitely excited now. And so, I must admit, was I.

"But I haven't," I wailed, "a thing to wear."

"You have a cranberry camel's-hair coat."

Followed a week as crowded with excitement as a persimmon with seeds. Telegrams! Air mails!—The little beauty operator held the receiver out like a Clark Gable hat and poked her head under the dryer. "Mrs. Swingert! Chicago calling! I hope it ain't bad news."

Each message from a different authority. Each conflicting with the preceding. Would I be at the office of the production manager, NBC studio, Merchandise Mart, Saturday morning at nine o'clock? (This from the NBC production manager.) Would I be at the Sherman Hotel so that Mr. Sweet, NBC Agricultural Director, could pick me up there at 9:30? (This from the Milwaukee advertising agency in charge of the program.) Would I be in Chicago by noon Saturday? (This from the Farnham and Farnham fieldman.)

Came the question of subject! Would I—this being home-improvement week—talk about farm-home improvement? I would not? (Voice over wire loses portion of its bubbling tone.) What had I then to suggest?—I had to suggest—a tribute to the American farm woman. To a woman advised, patronized, sentimentalized, but rarely understood or soundly evaluated. This squeezed into tact-

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ful phrasing, and—with additional tempering at other end of line—eventually (albeit guardedly) approved.

The soothing flattery of Pullman-car deference! Sweet to crawl between sheets without having to wonder whether either should be washed tomorrow, or either mended. To fall asleep at Iowa City—wake to the cool gassy smell of South Chicago.

The grabbing and pushing at the station! Everyone doing things *for* you. But no one *smiling* at or *liking* you. —A suite at the Sherman. How silly! Up nine flights and a block around. Two beds each in two identical rooms. Like a hundred dollars' worth of ham and eggs. Call from Mr. Sweet. Coming right down.

Mr. Sweet proves to be larger and even more bubbling than his telephone voice. Cab careens onward in general direction of the river. "Just thought I'd pick you up, Mrs. Swingert. Give you the lay of the land. Tip you off. Now, first you're going to meet about a dozen fellows. All experts in their line. When it comes to production, engineering, how to get the stuff over the air, what the city gang wants, they know their stuff. When it comes to a farm program, not a one of 'em knows a damn thing. So tell 'em what you want. That's what you're here for."

Mr. Sweet ensconces me in NBC office. Puts through three calls to New York, one to Ames, Iowa, one to San Francisco. (Odd suspicion that he might be trying to impress me. Or is *that* the way things are really *done* here?) Sails out of the room. Returns with Mr. Someone-or-Other, with a beautiful liquid Southern voice, who springs forward, glares at Mr. Sweet, presses my palm, takes my coat.

"A—great honah, Missus Swingut. Shuah pleased! A great honah!"

Mr. Liquid-Voice, I am informed, is the agency's man. He, it seems after proper acquaintance and consultation, will write my script.

Enter *Big* Representative of Farnham and Farnham. Behind him *Little* Representative. Little Representative meekest-looking man I've ever seen. Big Representative disappears. Little Representative meekly draws up chair. Meekly dips into brief case. Seems to know right pocket. Draws out sheaf of correspondence.

"Now," sings Liquid-Voice, "down to business. Mrs. Swingut, yuah goin' to give us the stuff for a three-minute knock-'em-down intuhvuah about—ah—"

"—The American Farm Woman," says the Little Fellow meekly, not lifting his head from the correspondence.

"Yes, suh! A—er—tribute to the American Fahm Woman."

"No syrup!" says the Little Fellow. I jump—squeak very slightly! I'm beginning to like the Little Fellow very much indeed. (*continued on page* 36)

DRAWING BY ROBERT FAWCETT

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Hollywood, Calif., Mar. 1. –

FRANK J. TAYLOR

THE PUBLICITY *build-up for a Class A film... examining* Union Pacific *and its 252 promotional angles... how Lincoln, Roosevelt, and legs are employed to make news*

TERRIFIC is Hollywood's indispensable word. If it were dropped out of the vocabulary overnight, most of the studios would fold up. Every major picture is terrific. Every outstanding scene is terrific. The ideas behind all leading pictures are terrific. Every star from Claudette Colbert to Mickey Rooney is, in his or her way, positively terrific. So likewise are the propaganda machines that have made of Hollywood (a mythical town that doesn't exist on any official map) a date line second only to Washington, D. C. The pressroom of each major studio is an aggregation of reportorial talent that compares in size with the staff of a metropolitan newspaper.

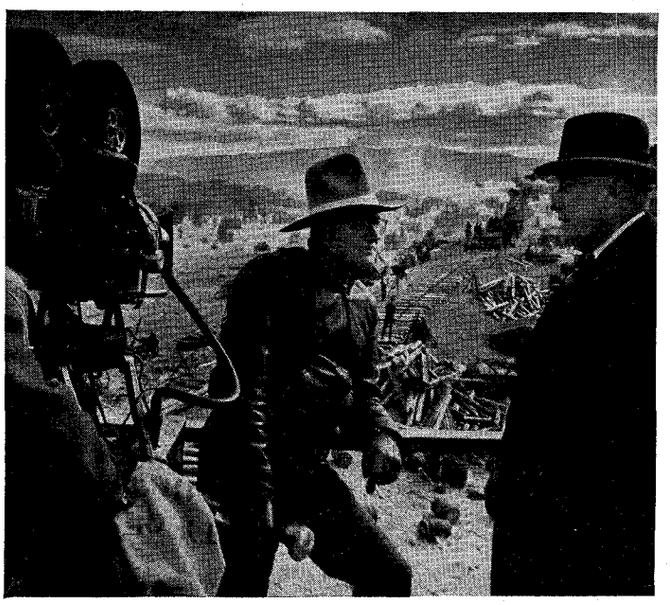
The publicity build-up for a Class A picture is no hit-or-miss barrage of handouts, but a highly organized news service exactly the reverse of a newspaper. Where the managing editor of a daily sucks the world's happenings through the newsroom funnel to sardine them all into one compact edition, the publicity director of the studio does just the opposite. He blows the studio gossip out through the unit-room funnel and his "planters" puff it into ten thousand publicity outlets from Bangor to Singapore. Since the youth of Emporia and the Bronx and Beverly Hills and Buenos Aires all get their ideas of life and love and styles and furnishings from the same identical Hollywood cinema scenes, everything that Hollywood does is news, if the publicist will only package the stuff properly.

The angles that a studio press bureau can figure to capitalize on this unholy interest in Hollywood are without end. To appreciate the phenomena, follow the dithers of a press bureau like Paramount's over a single picture like *Union Pacific*. A press bureau invariably goes into dithers over an A picture and since there are around thirty A pictures a year from a studio like Paramount, MGM, Warner Brothers, or RKO, the life of a movie publicist is a life on an ocean wave—of dithers. *Union Pacific* developed into a tidal sweep for the publicity staff because it was Cecil B. De Mille's sixty-fifth epic. Also it was Picture Number 1200 for the studio, for which De Mille launched Picture Number 1, *The Squaw Man,* exactly a quarter of a century ago.

II

THE backbone of each studio pressroom is the unit man. Long before De Mille had definitely settled upon the wedding of the rails as the vehicle for this momentous occasion, Unit Man Bill Hebert was slipping the word to the planters that "C. B. is working on something terrific." The planters in turn sowed the seed with the three hundred-odd Hollywood correspondents recognized by the Hays Office. Next, Mr. Hebert had discovered that De Mille had gone out on his yacht to write a railroad story. Then he dropped the hint that Paramount had bought Ernest Haycox's novel *The Trouble-shooter.*

That let the cat out of the bag. *The Trouble-shooter* dramatized the building of the Union Pacific Railroad by Casement's Irish. Soon there followed a landslide of inside stories about how De Mille



Union Pacific's *best publicity tie-up was with the Union Pacific Railroad. Here is U.P. President Jeffers on the set*

Another stunt: Producer-director Cecil B. De Mille poses at the key of the oldest surviving telegraph transmitter

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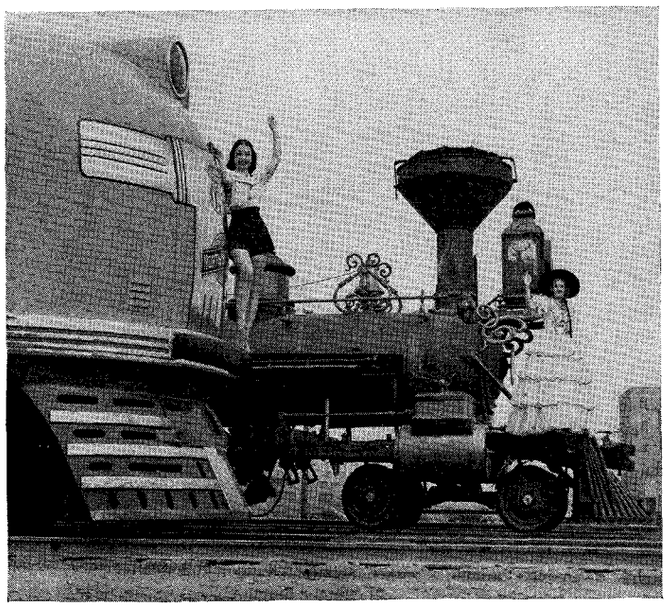
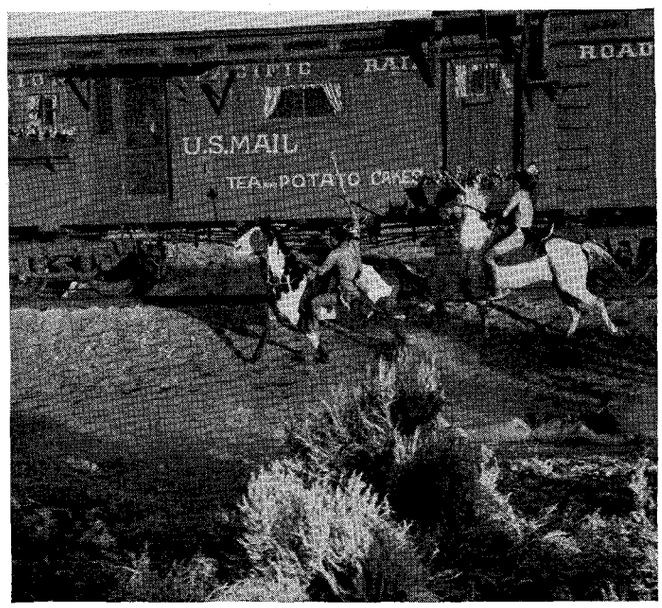


Streamliner and shorts vs. wood-burner and hoopskirt—one of the most widely printed of U.P. *publicity shots*



Publicity still of a scene from the picture—two Indians storm the mail car, one Indian lies dead at lower right

was using Haycox's characters but writing his own story. How he was looking for a tough guy to play the part of Sid Campeau, the end-o'-track gambler. How Paramount had taken over the defunct Virginia & Truckee Railroad, and acquired more rolling stock than any studio ever owned before. How De Mille had borrowed Barbara Stanwyck from RKO for Mollie Monahan, the feminine lead. How he had picked Joel McCrea as Jeff Butler, the trouble-shooting hero. How Paramount was reconstructing, up near Iron Springs, Utah, the entire frontier town of Cheyenne, Wyoming, and was laying six miles of track with "Irishmen," who had to be taught the Irish brogue by a professor from Dublin. How the studio had hired all the Indians in Utah to re-enact attacks on the railroad workers. And how De Mille had petitioned Secretary of the Treasury Morgenthau for enough gold to duplicate the historic gold spike that united the rails of the Union Pacific and the Central Pacific at Promontory Point—a sure-fire gag, whether Paramount got the gold or not.

These and a hundred other ideas filtered through the agile mind of Mr. Hebert, whose job is covering De Mille just as a waterfront reporter covers the wharves. Mr. Hebert is De Mille's shadow, and "C. B.'s" gag man on the Lux radio hour which reaches twenty million people—incidentally, one of Hollywood's choice outlets for gossip and gags. De Mille himself is terrific, too, meaning that he rates billing on the marquees of picture theaters along with, and frequently above, the stars. Only five producers who direct their own pictures are so honored, the others being Frank Capra, Frank Lloyd, Wesley Ruggles, and Ernest Lubitsch.

Union Pacific called for the services of two unit men because it was shot partly in Utah and partly in Hollywood. While Hebert shadowed De Mille in Hollywood, Bob Fender, another reporter, accompanied Associate Producer William Pine, Location Director Arthur Rosson, and the cast to Iron Springs, Utah, to cover the location shooting. During the six weeks that the company worked on location, Fender relied, not only on his nose for news to turn up the four to six stories transmitted daily by wire or mail to the unit-room reservoir, but he had the benefit of a twenty-two-page mimeographed book of "Angles" cooked up in a publicity-staff huddle.

Every big picture rates one of these idea huddles, and they, in their way, are terrific. When the best propaganda minds are called together bright and early in the morning by Terry De Lapp, who is the managing editor, so to speak, of the studio's publicity sharpshooters, all phones are stilled, and not even Donald Duck could disturb the high-powered thinking of the brain trust. An idea of the importance attached to these sessions may be gleaned from the fact that Robert M. Gillham, who is Paramount's director of publicity and advertising, regularly commutes by plane from New York to Hollywood to sit in on them.

In the *Union Pacific* huddle, the boys were sparking like an old wood-burner. Ideas burst like Roman candles, some of them terrific, others a little dim. One and all were faithfully taken down in shorthand to be mimeographed and studied—252 stunts, gags, and angles. Everybody from Abraham Lincoln to Franklin D. Roosevelt, who was gagged to write the foreword of the epic, landed a prospective job in the build-up for the picture. Pick out a few of the bright ideas at random:

"Akim Tamiroff, the bullwhacker in the picture, has played the rôle of a Persian emir, a Chinese general, a French cannoneer, a Cossack, and now he's a muleskinner with an Irish brogue. Tamiroff is so proficient with a bullwhip that he can snap cigars out of a smoker's mouth. Why not get a magic-eye camera to cover these whipping scenes? Isn't Tamiroff's bullwhip classed as a deadly weapon? How about a gag of having the police issue a permit for him to carry it?"

"Why not persuade W. Averill Harriman, chairman of the board of the Union Pacific Railroad, to come to Hollywood for the opening of the picture? Why not gag William Jeffers, president of the railroad, to come out and see that the movie railroad is put together right?"

"How about having a press preview of the picture on a Union Pacific streamline train, with all the gaming paraphernalia from the end-of-rail gambling joints set up in the baggage car for the entertainment of the reviewers?"

"Why not round up a complete set of different types of women's stockings from ones worn in 1860 to the sheer silk of today and have Sheila Darcy wear them for a swell layout of leg art?"

"How about working up a ditty *Doing the U. P.* out of some old railroad chanty, and hop it up with a swing arrangement and work out a dance on the order of the Lambeth Walk? Why not ask Bing Crosby to put swing in the

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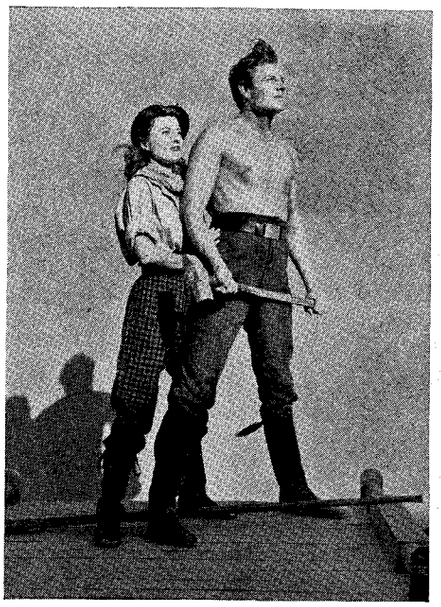
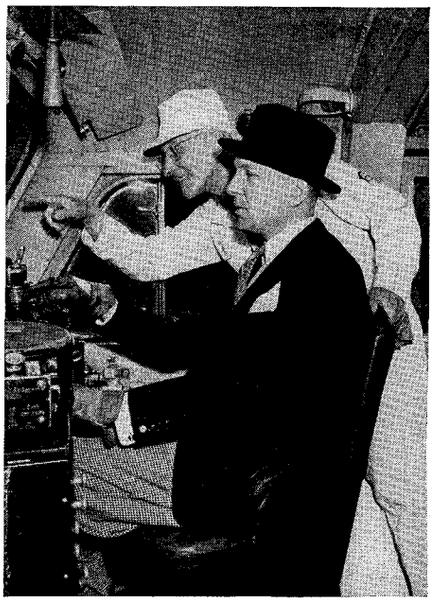


Double sex-appeal shot—Barbara Stanwyck and Joel McCrea, stars of U.P.

Brian Donlevy, who plays the "heavy," reads to the end-o'-the-line girls



Lucius Beebe, prompted by the studio, pilots a U.P. train into Los Angeles

Union Pacific chanty *Drill, Ye Terriers, Drill!* on his radio program?"

"Why not feature De Mille as the world's greatest general? He has directed military campaigns in every war from 1812 to modern times. *Union Pacific* adds Indian wars to his repertoire. Why not have a Pullman car named De Mille? Why not a train?"

"Wouldn't it make a good gag to find a real Casey Jones for this picture and hang gags on him? Might be a mythical character who writes ribbing letters to De Mille. Another stunt—get some Mormon kid to stow away on the original locomotive, the *J. W. Bowker,* used in the picture, to ride from Utah to Hollywood hoping to crash pictures."

"Why not get the kids of the country searching car sidings for an old railroad coach? Get out a story that De Mille is looking for a certain car, giving description, year of manufacture, and serial number. This might be terrific."

And so on, down to angle Number 252.

III

There are some sixty people in the Paramount press division, and most of them fell heir to anywhere from one to a dozen definite jobs for plugging *Union Pacific*. The big load was shouldered by the two unit men, Bill Hebert, in Hollywood, and Fender, in Utah. When the company returned to the studio, Fender sat down in the unit room and wrote steadily for a week, turning out sixty-six stories, in addition to a hundred and fifty sent in from location. Yarns like the one about President Jeffers of the Union Pacific who dropped into Iron Springs to watch the shooting for a couple of hours and got so interested he parked his car on a siding and stayed two days. This was great stuff, because Mr. Jeffers' father was one of the Irish gang bosses when the Union Pacific was built, and Mr. Jeffers himself started work as a kid in a section gang. The gag was to play him as the highest-priced technical adviser any picture ever had.

The hundreds of Indians rounded up from reservations in Utah, Arizona, and Nevada for the big attack on the Union Pacific train were grist in Fender's mill. First their chiefs balked at living in the Cedar City hotels, where the studio had made reservations for them, preferring their teepees, although, curiously enough, none of them were teepee Indians. When wintry winds swept out of the north, catching the company unprepared, the braves shivered in breech clouts, staged a squat-down strike, and demanded more clothing for the big scene. When two bad men escaped from the Cedar City jail, Fender saw that the cowboys in the cast were deputized to help the sheriff in his man hunt. He found a rosy-cheeked waitress in the hotel dining room who had tried two years before to crash Hollywood, had failed, and returned to her restaurant job, broke. She became the darling of the cast, was given screen tests, and was "discovered" right in Cedar City to be just the character needed for a minor scene in the picture. No item however insignificant was overlooked, if it carried the words "Union Pacific" into print or on the air. The slogan of Hollywood publicity staffs is "Plug the title of the picture."

This bale of copy plumped first on the desk of Bert Holloway, who might be called the Paramount city editor. Half of Mr. Holloway's job is to make two or three stories blossom where only one bloomed before. The other half is to blue-pencil the stuff as mercilessly as a copy desk, after which it flows into the planting division, where De Lapp scans the yarns for policy angles before feeding it to his planters.

In Hollywood, some stories are planted "live," others "canned." The live planters get the first crack at everything. They deliver the stuff in tips over the phone or through personal contacts with correspondents of newspapers, press associations, magazines, or with columnists and radio commentators. Live planting consists of offering suggestions and making materials or interviews available. The writer does the writing.

A Hollywood planter in action is the stock movie conception of a big-shot businessman with half a dozen phones on his desk, the receivers off at least five of them at the same time. "Just a minute," "Hold everything a second," "Don't hang up," "One second, please," he tells four of the telephones, then purrs into the fifth, "Here's a hot tip, Joe. Hop out to the *Union Pacific* set today, will you?"

"All movie sets give me a bellyache," replies Joe, the skeptical columnist.

"But this shot's terrific! They've brought an old wood-burner down from Utah and have a whole railroad yard on Stage Nine."

"Railroad stuff is dead. My readers want to read about real people. Gotta have something with sex appeal."

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"Then this *Union Pacific* shot's your dish. I was just about to tell you they've got a carload of hussies—you know, the dames that followed the railroad gangs, and—hello, hello, Joe? You'll be right out? Swell!"

Every time he plants a story, the planter scribbles a note about his feat on the margin of the sheaf of copy. That is to tip off subsequent planters, so they will not feed the same tale to another outlet. Each of the innumerable avenues of propaganda must be protected with an exclusive item, and along toward the end of a big planting job, the boys and girls are scraping bottom in their frantic grasping for fresh angles. "Double-planting" is a cardinal and unforgivable sin.

After all of the live planters have taken their cut at the *Union Pacific* material, the feature staff goes to work on the canned copy. This is still exclusive for each outlet, because it is a fundamental with De Lapp never to mix up the editors or give any two editors the same yarn. The feature stuff from *Union Pacific*, like that of other major pictures, is built on the basis of five important papers in each town. Everything is in sets of five. There are five sets of "leg art," five sets of "star heads," and a similar number of sets of "news art," "scenes in the making," "fashions," and "production stills." To make sure that no two papers in the same town get identical pictures, all of the art developed by the studio photographer is run through a device known as the "xylophone," a long rack covering three sides of a room, with 1500 sectional pigeonholes, each representing a newspaper or other publication that uses Hollywood art. Each compartment in this xylophone is further identified by colors to indicate the paper's preference in the matter of art. Rufus Blair, who heads the direct national-distribution service, is in touch with all the drama, rotogravure, and picture editors in the country. Blair makes four trips around the country a year to call on drama and roto editors and learn their whims from personal contact.

Operating in connection with all this is the New York publicity department. Here a large staff places stories, pictures, and advertising in the metropolitan dailies, big magazines, and the foreign press. Likewise, they prepare a press book (about the size of *Life*) jammed full of pep talk and promotion ideas for theater managers throughout the country. Feature stories, ad layouts, merchandise tie-ups, and even canned reviews are included, as well as complete instructions on how to plant them. And from the same office there runs a constant stream of advance men, who go on the road to ballyhoo coming attractions in other large cities where they will be playing.

The New York office also gets space by its handling of Hollywood visitors. Should a glamorous Paramount star arrive in New York by boat, plane, or train, a publicity man will meet her, steer her among the cameramen and reporters he has gathered for the occasion, and take her to her hotel. A day or so later he may be introducing her to people of the press whom he has invited to the Waldorf for cocktails.

IV

Some of the new propaganda channels, unknown five years ago, are simply terrific outlets today. News pictures by telephoto, for example. This avenue falls in the bailiwick of Fenton Gresser, Paramount's "downtown planter," and the early bird of the staff. It is his job to be Jerry-on-the-job at the wire-service bureaus in Los Angeles when the wires open. About that time the bureau men are likely to be tearing their hair for a wire opener. Gresser, with his sheaf of newspictures under his arm: William Jeffers, president of the Union Pacific, and Cecil B. De Mille, conferring by a railroad track in Utah; or Carla Hailey, out with location company, teaching Johnny Domingo, a Piute brave, to dance the Lambeth Walk. A picture that may draw a disdainful, "Lousy!" from a wire editor at 11:00 A.M., when the bureau is surfeited with news shots, is just as likely as not to be a lifesaver four hours earlier, when the wire opens. And if art comes over the wire, the chances are about trebled that the editors will use it—the same art.

Another new and increasingly important channel to the public is the radio news commentator. Over two hundred radio stations now use the Paramount weekly radio letter, "Fifteen Minutes in Hollywood," filled with gossipy tidbits about not only this studio's pictures and stars, but others as well. The press division's planters plant exclusive news items with the Hollywood radio commentators and the radio syndicates, such as Fenton Earnshaw's "Radio Nite-Letter," which is wired every day to a string of client stations to be read by local announcers.

Planting the "fan mags" is the special job of Katherine Coughlan. The fourteen fan publications have a combined monthly circulation of ten million, and they require (*continued on page* 38)

The locomotive is the 1860 J. W. Bowker, *the girls add leg interest to the shot*

A nationwide search turned up one wooden Indian, several weeks of hot publicity

The movie Zaza *affected women's fashions;* U.P.'s *angle-men will try to repeat*

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Bone Joe and the Smokin' Woman

BY MARI SANDOZ

Author of "Slogum House"

THE MORNING sun of June lay warm and friendly over the sprawling knoll of buildings that was the home ranch of Rutherford Bills. Out on the wide sweep of meadow the shadows of a few clouds seemed to loiter before they ran toward the hills like playful colts in the wind. On the road a high-racked bone picker's wagon was headed away from the ranch through hub-deep timothy, the little man hunched on the load prodding his four Indian ponies along as fast as he could make them go.

Although Bone Joe had been stopping at the Bills place for ten years, today was the first time he ever came with a tie around his dusty collar, and even Hippy had left his dough pans to see the sight. "Stickin' feathers on that buzzard's neck ain't gonna make no eagle outa him," the cook predicted.

"No, maybe not, Hippy," Cap Bills admitted, stuffing a long envelope away in his inside pocket. "Maybe not. But if a buzzard'd have the sense to fly high enough, there'd be few who could tell the difference."

Hippy swung around on his good leg to look up at his boss, and then went limping back to his dough-punching. He had come up from Texas in the eighties with Rutherford Bills as a kid, worked with him and for him all the thirty years since. He wasn't listening to such talk. No buzzard was a-flying so high a bullet from a Bills rifle wouldn't fetch him down.

But outside, the old cowman still looked after the top-heavy bone wagon, watching it lurch slowly across the meadow toward the sand pass, the hind wheels rickety, one lower than the other, and running fast to keep up.

Until he was out of sight of the ranch, Bone Joe did his best to hustle his thin-necked ponies along with the sharp end of his willow prod. But as soon as the trail cut in between the steep hills of the pass he settled back on his load of bleached bones, letting the old rope lines sag, the sore-shouldered ponies nip at the weeds alongside as they plodded the heavy sand.

As the bone wagon passed the Gaylor fork, an open roadster swept in on the trail from the town. It was Hortense Bills, old Cap's daughter, her red auto veil flying, the wheels throwing sand at every curve. When she saw the bone rack, she turned in close behind it, hit her klaxon hard, and swung out around. Barely missing the tail board, she was gone toward the ranch without looking back, scattering dust behind her, and a scrap of bone man's song.

"Stinkin' old bone picker, ye ha ha," she sang, for all the hills to hear.

The man knew the words well, but this time they brought no red to his wind-burned face. At the crash of the klaxon and the rush of the passing car his sleepy little ponies had shied sideways, cramping the wheels hard. The top-heavy wagon teetered a moment and went down over the small wheel, breaking the old tongue out and spilling the man in a white avalanche of bones. Caught in the stiff lines, he managed to hang on, and was dragged away on his stomach over the bunch grass and through fragrant prairie roses into a nest of bull-tongue cactus, golden-yellow with bloom.

The winded old ponies finally stopped. Slowly Bone Joe lifted his head to wipe the dust and blood from his face, moving himself cautiously, afraid the wild-eyed animals might shy again, afraid he was smashed like the old wagon rack. But he was tough as the barbed wire of a feed corral, and unbroken, though his clothes

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were ripped to strings from wrist to knee, his skin torn and bleeding, his tie and one shoe gone.

Carefully he went over himself, jerking the thorns away, digging with his knife blade at those broken off close, until the tears stung his raw cheeks. And long before he was done he was pulling himself up to look back toward the pass where only a thin haze of dust along the hills remained to show which way the daughter of Rutherford Bills had gone.

*

The dry shell of moon hung low when Bone Joe finally pulled into his own little valley. He was hungry and tired from the long job of repairing and reloading his wagon, stiff and sore from the dragging, his arms and face swollen, the cactus spines broken deep in his flesh burning like new boils. But the pale moon made a pewter saucer of the little alkali lake, and the bleaching bones scattered about the dugout looked like white chickens undisturbed by the crippled old coyote always gnawing at a dry joint or a hoof. At the first creak of the wagon, the little scavenger lifted his sharp ears and bounded off into a gully, silent as a shadow. He couldn't know that Bone Joe had no interest in him until winter primed his hide.

With the fire going in the dugout and his skinned arms and chest wrapped in flour sacking soaked in badger grease, Bone Joe stirred up a batch of flapjacks in his old syrup bucket. But long before the last one was fried he was thinking of Hortense Bills again, of her black hair, shiny as a magpie's wing, her eyes gray and straight-browed as a man's, her walk ornery as a wild colt's.

When the last of the flapjack batter was fried up, Bone Joe balanced himself precariously on the top of a nail keg to reach down the elk head over the ridgepole, a fine one he had found years ago in a grassy old blowout, the antlers wide-pronged and weathered to a dead white. With a little red velvet over the skull, stuffed out good with sawdust, it would make a mighty pretty thing, even for a high-toned young ranch lady.

II

It was a week before Bone Joe got out again. By that time he had slept the anger from his tortured muscles, soaked the last of the festering thorns from his flesh, and got into an old pair of pants some duck hunters left behind last fall. He looked better than any time since he drifted into the freeland region ten years before. Although only twenty-four then, he wasn't much on duding up or for Saturday-night girling.

"That little bone picker looks like some poor old broomtail that's been clubbed over the head and kicked away from the feed so often he can't seem to eat with any confidence," Rutherford Bills had told Hippy pityingly the first time Joe stopped at the cookhouse.

But even the cook wasted no sympathy on the bone picker. "Them teeth a hisn bucks out so from reachin' for grub," he said in disgust after he saw Joe Leems clean up a kettle of Irish stew and all the stuff usually left on the oilcloth table, including the horse-radish and the ketchup.

Most of the other ranchers wouldn't hand out so much as a cold biscuit to the bone man, claiming he picked up stray tools, pulled their cedar posts, and left every gate or take-down open. But mostly people looked on him as a harmless runt, furnishing diversion around the post-office heater or at sales where there was always a free lunch. Not even the lone women homesteaders were afraid of him, probably because he never stopped at their doors, nor stood off looking after them as he did Hortense Bills since the first time he saw her climb up the stirrups to the back of Cap's old buckskin.

Although Bone Joe came in early enough for alfalfa land, he sneaked away into that dead little pocket, with its briny lake that smelled like a nest of old mallard eggs in August, the grass around it so gray and woody no cow would eat it—land that frosted white with alkali in the spring, especially where he broke out sod enough for his dugout.

But Joe Leems, who brought his bone wagon with him, wasn't sensitive to smells and had no farming intentions. He found that the hills hadn't been worked since the buffalo bone men skimmed them thirty years before. By the first winter he had a long rick bleaching on the right of way at Gaylor, ready for shipment, and had heard the rollicking bone picker's song many times as cowboys dog-loped past him out on the trails. Even the ranch children sang the one verse their mothers would countenance, shouting out the last lines good and loud and slapping their saddle leather to the chorus:

Wagons pull in from the prairie dry
To ricks of bleaching bones piled high.
Four dollars a ton, but not for Sed,
A rattler was a-watchin' that buffalo head;
One settler less to bust up the sod
And pray for rain from a deaf old God.

Stinkin' old bone picker, ye ha ha,
Robbin' the coyotes, eye ye ha ha.

From the first, Bone Joe got no mail and he could never be tied down to a definite statement about anything, particularly his origins. To the latecomers he was as much a part of the drab, ragged, smelly little alkali flat as though he had grown from its soil. His hair was to his neck and gray with dust, his dark and bony knees always sticking through several ragged pairs of overalls that he had picked up around some bunkhouse or livery stable where the former occupant shed them like the faded skin of a snake.

He cashed some pretty fair checks at the bank the last few years, but the money was never there long before some hard-pressed rancher slipped around to the dugout in the dark to do a little business. Once when a fresh wave of settlers came in, the new women, with ladies-aid ideas, made him a Christmas quilt. The ranch hands slapped their leather chaps hard at that one. "With you a-feedin' him, Hippy, most a the cowmen payin' him blood interest and them nester women takin' him beddin', he ought to make it to grass—"

But he really was a hustler, and so far as anybody knew, Hortense Bills and her squawking klaxon were the first to interrupt his work, and then only until he could move around enough to catch up his ponies.

With his thin whiskers scraped off around the brown scabs of his healing face and the elk head in the wagon, he stopped in the Bills yard, not going in to Hippy as usual, or up to the big house as he did sometimes lately. Just

Scribner's

SHORT NOVEL

In 1935 Mari Sandoz's first book, "Old Jules," won the $5000 Atlantic nonfiction prize. The critics gave it a round of praise seldom accorded a first book—or any book, for that matter. It was an immediate best-seller and, what's more, it's still selling. The next book from Mari Sandoz was a novel, "Slogum House." It too was a best-seller and an outstanding critical success. And now from this brilliant writer comes a third important piece of writing. It is "Bone Joe and the Smokin' Woman," and we are proud to offer it as this month's Short Novel.

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waited, making no answer to the choreman's yell, "Hi, there, Joe—looks like you got you a snute full a itch somewheres—" and pretending not to hear him whistle the bone picker's song.

Finally Hortense came riding in from the pasture, wide-hatted, her silk shirt bright as a clump of golden sweet peas against a hill, the fringe of her gauntlets scarcely stirring, so easy was her seat on her loping pinto. At the gate she swung her arm around the stick and opened it without dismounting, closing it as handily as any cowboy, or Cap Bills himself.

While she watered her horse at the tank, Bone Joe shuffled forward, very small in his baggy clothes, holding the whitened elk head out awkwardly before him. With the pinto shying, jerking at the bit, Hortense tried to understand the man's stammerings. Suddenly she began to laugh, head thrown back, right out for all the yard and the bunkhouse to hear.

But as the man's mousy little face darkened, his knob of a chin set, she stopped. "You mean it—for me?" she asked.

"Maybe—" the man began slowly, not able to commit himself, the high apple of his neck bobbing. "Yeh—I guess maybe I could let you have the horns."

Now Hortense was laughing again, but quietly, with dimples and friendly white teeth for the man. Slyly she touched her heel to the off side of the agitated pinto and set him to an impatient crowhopping. "Oh, I couldn't let you rob yourself," she called back to the man as the horse carried her away into the yard. "But thank you for letting me see the fine horns," she added, over her shoulder.

So Bone Joe had to take the elk head back to his wagon, with the choreman and Hippy and anyone at the bunkhouse knowing, seeing it all. And when he was gone the father came out into the heat and sun of the yard, his hair blowing, shaggy as an iron-gray mustang in winter.

"You might have taken the head," he told his daughter quietly.

"From that smelly old bone picker?"

"He picks the best bones in the country," Rutherford Bills said.

III

FROM his first coming, Rutherford Bills stood out tall among the cattlemen of the sandhills, his gray cowman's hat well above the rest, like a spruce rearing out of a forest of slim pines. He went at everything as he straddled a bronch, swift and confident, not sparing of bit or spur. There were some who claimed they remembered when he came in from the south like any other cowhand, with a slicker tied behind his saddle, his soogans and other traps on a pack horse. But even then his horses were good ones.

After looking around a little he settled on Fall Creek and while the hands threw up some log buildings and pole corrals, he covered the region on Gold Dust, his buckskin. He bought up a small herd of the better Texas cattle from the later trailers, grazed them into meat on the free range, and made money selling beef to the Indians, while he built up his herd. By the time the railroad came he was ready to ship good grass-fat stock. His word was better than paper to the bank and his thick, black hair, graying early at the temples, better than gold with the ladies.

When the country tamed down some he brought in a big flat piano and a pretty little Eastern bride, with a waistline two hand-spans around, a blue chip hat with green wings pinned to her mass of light curls. He showed her off by candlelight in the ranch living room, playing sentimental little snatches at her harp or on the piano.

But soon it came out that the little bride was really as fragile as she looked and didn't like the country. The wind dried her soft, shining curls, coarsened the delicate violet-rose of her cheeks, darkened the pale shadows of her eyes and made her head ache. The people were so uncouth, the country so wide, so dreadfully empty and plain. Only one spot seemed to please her—the headwaters of the south branch of Fall Creek. The little pocket was ringed in by hills, the low marshy meadow about the palmful of lake blue with the violets of May. A few slim young cottonwoods stood shyly together at the pool springs of the upper end. Diane Bills filed on this bit of land, and her tall husband put up a little doll's house for her beside the peaceful, grass-hung thread of stream, with the hills standing firm against the winds. In the fall the ailing little Diane went East and by spring there was only her portrait over the closed piano in the ranch living room and a new baby, Hortense, to remind Rutherford Bills of the few months that were like a moment of sun on a knoll ringed in by a low, gray sky.

Cap Bills was a good cowman and always made money so long as the grass was free as the wind ruffling the long timothy of his meadows. But the time came when browning fence posts marched away to all the hazes of the horizon, when the yellow streaks of new settler trails crossed the prairie in every direction, the dark blocks of their soddies cramping the sweep of the eye, their hopeful windmills joining earth and air. Neighboring ranchers hired men with six shooters to keep the range clear, covered the land with fraudulent filings, and ate up the homesteaders' crops in the night. Cap Bills watched the covered wagons trail in, treated the newcomers like neighbors, and leased their grass, even went to the school elections to vote the maximum levy of taxes for the teacher's salary. The settlers called him damned white, but the other cattlemen stood away from him at the Stockmen's Hotel.

He didn't seem to be making much from his cattle any more, either, now that the sod busters had so much of his hay land, and so he went in for good horses—but the swamp fever got them. Next he tried Mexican cattle, at five dollars a head. They were gaunt range stock, wild as mustangs, and tore through barbed-wire fences like so much string every time they caught sight of a woman's skirt blowing. At the first snowfall they stood in little knots out in the wind, shivering, humped up high as the back of a snaky bronch. That winter was the worst since the eighties and when the snow broke up in April, only a handful of the new stock were still on their feet. That meant good picking for Bone Joe after two, three years of sun and rain.

All this time Hortense was in school in the East, with an aunt. But since she was eight she spent the summers loafing around the old ranch house or riding the hills with Cap. She had his dark skin that turned to a smooth, ruddy tan in the wind and sun, and two thick, dark braids with red ribbons flying out behind her as she kicked old Gold Dust into a broken-kneed little run to catch up with her father or maybe some dog-loping cowhand who had to tuck in his flapping shirttail when he saw her coming. But they liked her, teased her in a heavy way that she soon caught on to, and showed her where there might be blue Indian beads in ant hills.

They taught the girl to hold a calf down with a knee on its neck, and let her roll their cigarettes that they called fish worms when she finished them. From that a story got around among the older women of the region that the Bills girl was a young cigarette fiend, a smokin' gal, as they called it.

Rutherford Bills tried to remember that his little girl was growing up, would

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soon be a young woman. But she seemed so natural, so free and gay with her cronies of the corrals and the cookhouse, that he couldn't bring himself to spoil her summers.

And then gradually Bone Joe noticed the Bills girl. His little eyes, like glistening brown chokecherries in the sun wrinkles of his face, began to seek her out, follow her as she rode the range alone for flowers, perhaps for little blue lizards or for sand cherries.

At a ball game the summer Hortense was twelve and growing fast, Bone Joe held out a stick of chewing gum to her, and because the ranch hands were nudging each other, she took it and was teased all the way home by the sly humming of the bone picker's song. When Cap heard about it he told her she'd have to go back to her aunt if she couldn't learn to be a lady, saying this red-faced and angry. Hippy, with his own opinion of old maids fetching up children, got Hortense into the cookhouse. While he ironed her shirts, he told her some of the things he thought a girl ought to know with buzzards like Bone Joe, or any of the rest of the boys, for that matter, around loose.

"Life's a mighty good hoss and'll carry you a long day's travel if you learns her tricks early," he advised. "Don't never let her get her head bogged down, or clamp jaws on the bit—"

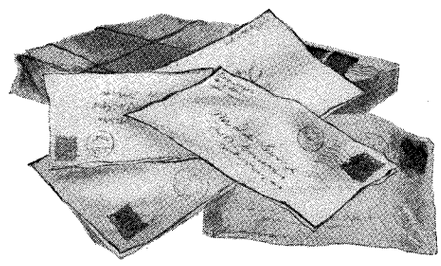
That was talk the girl could understand and with her overall pocket full of cookies she threw the reins over Gold Dust's shaggy mane and rode out into the hills to contemplate this new and appalling world that Hippy had showed her.

During the next four years Bone Joe seemed to be spreading himself pretty thin. The cattlemen had tried buying up the range, getting it safely this time. But that took money, and with a drop in beef prices and a hard winter they were borrowing running money where they could, and paying high for it. One after another, Bone Joe got to them, even risked a little on a fellow boiling potash from one of the alkali lakes down on the south road. Half-interest in the business, no matter how far it spread.

Then suddenly Germany was at war, her potash shut off to the world, and Eastern magnates came talking big production, big money to the little lake owners. But Bone Joe still scouted the range seventy, eighty miles each way for bones, except the weeks Hortense Bills was at the ranch. Then he picked the home region, his wagon crawling like a slow, awkward bug along the slopes, his little eyes always out for the darker patches of grass and for a glimpse of a girl, and a horse, perhaps only for a moment against some far sky.

IV

The August after Bone Joe brought the elk head to the Bills ranch, Vangie came from school with Hortense for a visit. Before the round-cheeked, jolly blonde girl had been at the ranch a day she knew everybody's nickname and had heard about Bone Joe, especially how he trailed Hortense around at the Fourth of July picnic down at Piller's Grove. She thought it was wonderful, so romantic. Even more romantic than Nickie, the poet, who wrote sonnets to



Hortense. The hands winked to each other, openly, largely, suggesting that poor Bone Joe wouldn't have a chance to slip up his gully this time. But the girl didn't mind, went right on teasing to be taken to his dugout. So the girls got into their riding knickers and shagged over the hills toward the Leems place.

Quietly the girls circled their horses down the gully used by the old coyote to sneak up on the place. The wagon was home, standing, tongue down, among the piles of old iron and bleaching bones. And under it, his hat over his face, one foot in the air, was Bone Joe, asleep with the smell of old and stale death all around him.

At their sly giggling, the commotion of the snorting horses, the man sat up, bumping his head on the wagon bed above him. Red under his bristles, he crawled out between the wheels, rubbing his scalp and staring at Hortense in her bright silk shirt. The girl told him who Vangie was and without waiting to be asked, the two slid off their horses and tied them away from the wagon and the bone piles. Then, as though the path were made for their feet, they started toward the door of the dugout against the hill, with Bone Joe stumbling along backward before them, trying to wave them aside as a woman might, to stop a determined milk cow from a cabbage patch. Calmly Hortense walked toward the old door on leather hinges, Vangie close at her boot heels.

Inside, the dugout was a dark cave to sun-blinded eyes, the only light coming through the open, glass-paned door. Against the far wall an old cot spring hung between posts driven into the ground. Near the door a legless, two-hole stove sat in a box of ashes, with an armful of cow chips stacked on the dirt floor, and from poles of the roof dangled a low forest of dusty sacks and bundles. Even from the doorway the place smelled like the nest of an animal.

Vangie stopped, but Hortense pulled her in, to sit beside her on the cot. The girl let herself down reluctantly, touching only the barest edge of the swinging springs, and jerked at the yellow sleeve of her friend, anxious to go.

But Hortense Bills was already acting the young lady calling on a gentleman, even though it was only Bone Joe in tattered shirt and overalls standing in the doorway of a dugout, stammering. Before he could get his words made there was a scratching under the cot and a soft, furry animal looked out, sniffed the air, and started to climb up the boot nearest him.

"Shoo—Git, git!" The man flapped his arms, his short upper lip jerking like a rabbit's. "Git, you—touchin' a lady—"

At that, little Vangie let one high giggle escape her and started Hortense too, laughing free, as though she were out on the open range. "A coon!" she finally cried, pretending it was the animal that was so funny.

Slowly Bone Joe began to grin, the thin skin of his mouth twitching over his buck teeth. In the meantime the young raccoon had settled himself in Hortense's lap and was pawing at the white thistle bloom in a buttonhole of her shirt, his bright little eyes on her face, his feet, like clawed hands, cautious, on the prickly flower.

Together the three watched the little fellow. He was the cutest thing, the girls said politely. Where did Mister—Mister Joe get him? And wouldn't it be nice for him here, out of the cold this winter!

No woman had ever spoken like this to Bone Joe, just as though he were anybody, and surely never Hortense Bills. So he let himself down to his nail-keg stool, dropped his hands between his knees, and began to talk a little, tasting the words cautiously. Yeh, sometimes the little bugger did seem kinda cute-like, he admitted, not committing himself completely. Guessed he just picked him up somewheres—out— Yeh, it might be nice here, round the fire, come winter. Maybe the little bugger wouldn't be here mucha the time—

Hortense understood the last. He

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wouldn't be here at all, not after the cold primed his hide, made it worth a dollar or so. But the young coon was sound asleep.

As their eyes accustomed themselves to the duskiness of the room, the girls looked around at the earth walls, almost covered with almanac pictures of pretty women with blue-black hair and considerable white skin showing. Half a dozen were of the same red-cheeked girl combing her loose hair beside a pool. And all the pictures had transparent clothes sketched in with pencil cross-hatching.

Bone Joe noticed Vangie nudge Hortense toward the pictures and his pinched little head filled into the puffy redness of a hairy turkey gobbler. His confidence gone now, he tried once more to get the girls out. Maybe—maybe it was a-gettin' pretty late, and five, six miles to ride, with badger holes and bums loose in the country—

"It is getting late, isn't it? I guess we had better stay to supper," Hortense said, as to a heartily appreciated invitation.

"Oh," Vangie gushed, dimpling as at a beau, "it's just lovely of you to ask us, isn't it, Hortense?"

So they prodded the flustered man on between them until he lighted the smoky lantern, scooped out some of the powdery gray ashes from under the stove with an old sardine can, and stirred up such a dust that even the little coon hid his head under Hortense's arm. With the cow-chip fire roaring, Bone Joe broke off a piece of brown chicory stick for the coffee pot and got out a greasy black skillet.

"I—I guess maybe I better fix up a few flapjacks," he said apologetically as he pried at an old syrup bucket. Outside the tin was streaked and rusty and when the lid finally popped up, the inside was really lined half an inch deep with old batter, as the cowboys said, the sour smell filling the whole dugout thick.

Now it was enough for Hortense. Dumping the coon to the ground she ran for the door, and with Vangie at her heels, swung to her horse. At the first jump of her pinto she began to laugh, and all through the valley the horses ran uncurbed, the girls rocking in their saddles, laughing aloud until they had to hang to the horns, gasping.

When the girls were gone, Bone Joe let himself down on the sagging old cot. But the gloom didn't keep him from knowing what a boar's nest the dugout must have seemed to the fine young ladies. And he had hoped to walk right up to the Bills' ranch house someday, without stopping at the cookhouse for grub, without bringing money for Cap's urgent needs. Just walk up to the house like a visitor, like any man.

Several times during the winter Bone Joe stopped at the cookhouse to eat up whatever Hippy set out for him and to get a little news. Once or twice he tried to lead up to Cap's sister, living in the East someplace, and to Cap's girl, going to school there. Maybe—maybe the cook knew the town?

Yeh, Hippy admitted, Miss Hortense was a-goin' to school. But he didn't say where.

So Bone Joe finally had to watch the ranch mail sack on the route for the address. And late in February a huge valentine drifted in at the college for Hortense. It came addressed in pencil, in a box like a fiddle case, a full-sized, gilt-paper violin standing away from a lacy background, with a swirl of pink roses around it. Hidden, but readily discoverable, were the letters J. L. Only the Gaylor postmark and the soiled fingerprints made Hortense think of Bone Joe at all, or remember that his name was Joe Leems. With the valentine and the wrappings in the apron of her uplifted skirt she ran to Vangie's room. Together they laughed until they were breathless. That bum in the dugout and his flapjack bucket! "To my Beloved," it said on the white ribbon among the roses. They howled it to each other as they popped candy into their mouths, candy the poet who made sonnets for his cowgirl from the West had sent them.

Next summer—just wait until next summer. They'd think of something rare for old Bone.

V

The day Cap Bills met the two girls at the depot, the bone picker was there in a khaki drill suit, waiting. But Hortense didn't see him. She was crying that her father looked so thin and aged; burying her face against his coat, she wiped her eyes and pretended it was joy at seeing him again.

So Bone Joe, standing off to the side, alone, stiff among the cream cans of the farmers, didn't get the greeting he hoped for—nothing at all but a hasty nod of recognition from Cap Bills.

At the ranch, while her soft little friend napped from the three-day trip, Hortense went to the cookhouse for an hour's serious talk. For the first time in his life, Hippy left the salt out of the pie crust he was mixing, and with company home, too. But it was pretty hard to admit to Hortense that every acre and hoof her father owned was mortgaged tight as a tick in a sheep's ear, and long overdue. The girl nodded slowly, her eyes still level and straight-browed, and once more she came away from the cookhouse with the world a strange, appalling place about her.

"You can't go a-lettin' on to Cap," Hippy had said.

She promised she wouldn't and so, although the father was away on business much of the time, probably trying to raise capital or a partner, Hortense plunged into a strenuous, boisterous summer with Vangie, always on the go, mostly by saddle because the horses came free. They went to every picnic, dance, rodeo, and celebration for miles around, always with plenty of Cap Bills' old friends to ask them to dinner or to stop for the night, if it was far. Always, too, with plenty of boys, the Pillers, or other ranchers' sons, for dancing partners and to buy them pop and sandwiches at the stands, or to shoot for kewpie dolls.

"That bob-haired smokin' gal!" envious mothers told each other when they saw the arms full of silk-frilled, painted dolls the girls always had to carry around through the crowds, although none of them had ever seen Hortense take even one puff from the cigarettes she rolled so swiftly and well.

Once the girls rode clear down to Sully, the potash town where Bone Joe was said to have his investments. It was ten times noisier and dustier than the summer before, the tar-paper hulks of the refining plants spreading wider, rearing higher, pointing great chimneys into the windy sky. The thousands of workmen slept in the hot, single-board sheds, thrown together in boom-town style, or in the rows of tar-paper shacks a quarter the size of Hippy's smokehouse, each with one window and a door, set up on high blocks, only separated far enough so a horsebacker or a hurrying woman could slip between.

As the girls ate hamburgers with pop at a stand, they spied Bone Joe's old wagon in the surging alley beside the bank. Soon he himself came out of the building, and the crowd parted for him, hats and caps sliding off, men making excuses to call his name, "How'do, Mister Leems," "Nice day, Mister Leems," while farther back there were nudgings, laughings, and hurried searches for a place to spit.

As Joe Leems swung his wagon past one of the shack rows, a woman in a yellow kimono waved to him, trying to coax him in. At her first sign he prodded his ponies into a (*continued on page 42*)

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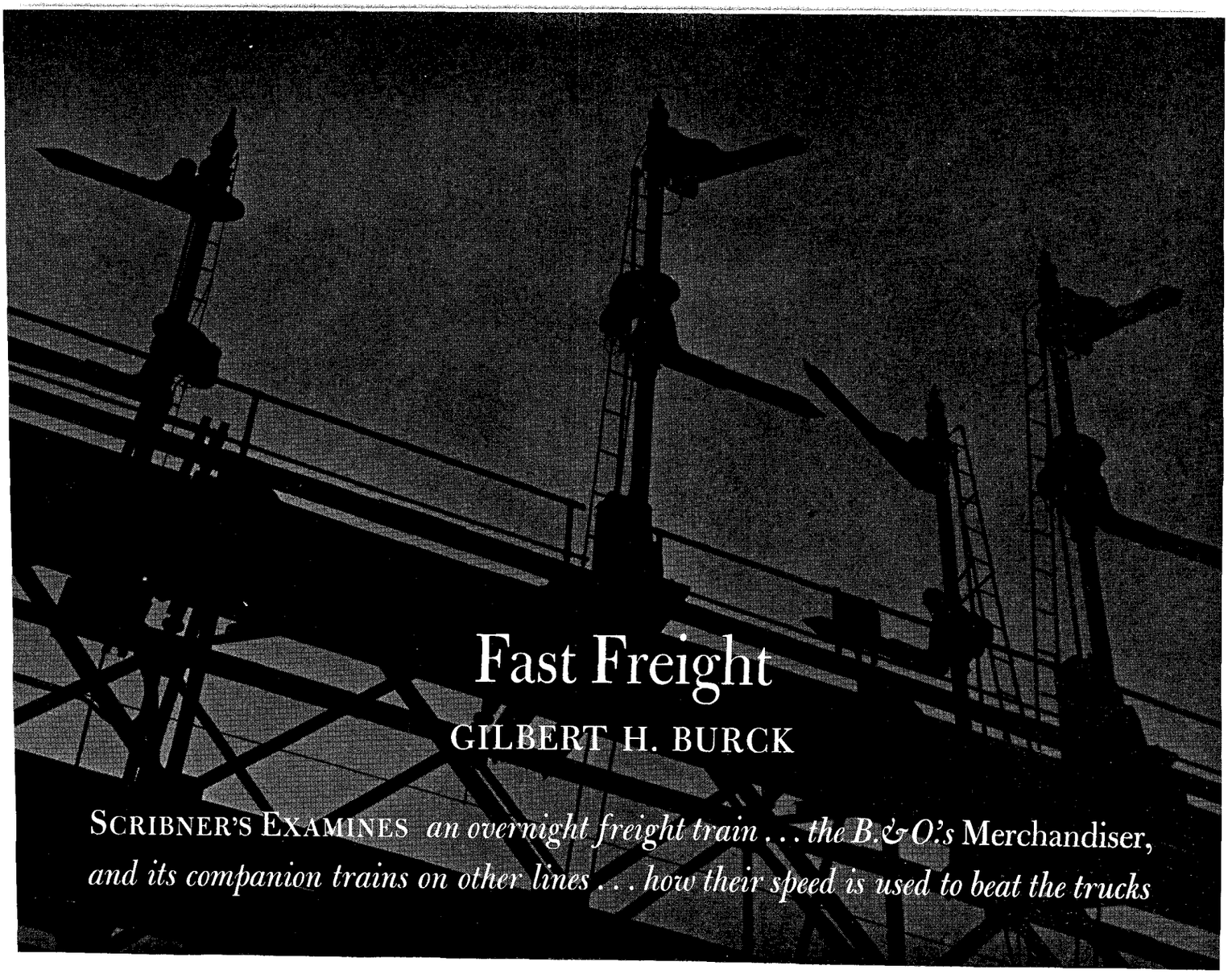

Fast Freight

GILBERT H. BURCK

SCRIBNER'S EXAMINES *an overnight freight train . . . the B.&O.'s* Merchandiser, *and its companion trains on other lines . . . how their speed is used to beat the trucks*

FIVE nights a week, between cities in scattered quarters of the nation, roll the swiftest freight trains the world ever has seen. Through rain and snow they keep their tight, rapid schedules with scrupulous constancy; week in and week out they make money—earning more than the average freight train, five or six times as much as the average passenger train. Sweeter still to railroad men, they are fulfilling their purpose in life: repelling the bold advances of the trucks, which have taken a tenth of the railroads' freight traffic and are aggressively eyeing another vulnerable tenth. These trains repel the trucks by hauling the small or less-than-carload stuff with the dependable celerity of a passenger express. Faster and safer and surer, in other words, than trucks can handle it.

Typical of these overnight freights, and in fact the fastest of them all, is the Baltimore & Ohio's *Merchandiser,* which covers the 525 miles between New York and Pittsburgh in less than thirteen hours. The engine is comparatively small, and of a kind normally assigned to passenger runs, capable of traveling over ninety miles an hour. It pulls one to three dozen cars, all fitted with steel (not cast-iron) wheels able to keep up with the locomotive's pace. What those cars carry is what differentiates the *Merchandiser* and the other overnight trains from the normal freight. Not one of the cars is devoted to a single shipment alone. Each is piled high with packages. Some are as small as a shoe box, some as large as a crated piano, all are in a hurry, wanted in Pittsburgh the next morning: a dress requisitioned for a party, a sumptuous baby carriage, a couple of Oriental rugs, a dozen men's suits. And, most significant, every item might have been carried in trucks over the expensive highways which auto-owning taxpayers, including railroad worker and bond holder, have laid down between New York and Pittsburgh.

II

TAKE Number 117, the westbound *Merchandiser,* on a typical journey . . .

All day long trucks had been backing up to Pier 22 in Manhattan, disgorging their cargoes into the boxcars waiting on the loading floats. By 5:30 the cars had been crammed with packages, their doors had been shut and sealed. The tugs came then, and shoved the floats across the river to the B. & O. yards in Jersey City. There a switch engine shuffled up, grabbed hold of the cars, and hauled them over to a clear track where a lone caboose stood. The crew arrived at 6:30; the road engine was coupled on; and we followed the conductor up into the cab, ready to depart.

The conductor compared watches with the engineer and wanted to know if he was ready. The engineer, out of good-natured perversity more than anything else, told him to keep his shirt on for five minutes while he set the lubricator feeds properly, and asked if they were going to pick up any cars at E-Port (short for Elizabethport). The conductor said two, and the engineer, peering through a cloud of fragrant cigar smoke at the lubricator-feed sights while he held a light bulb behind them, advised

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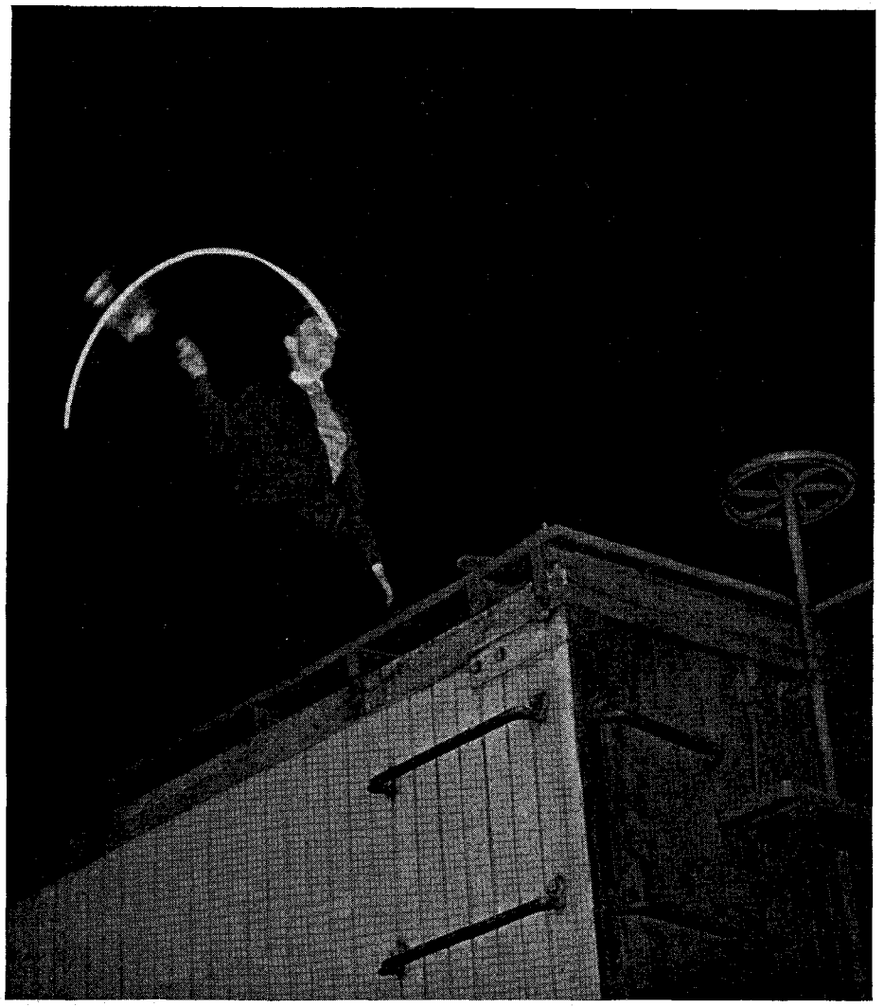

the skipper in a tone of jocose severity to beat it back to the caboose if he didn't want to be left behind. "We'll be rolling ninety miles an hour by the time the hack catches up to you," he promised.

But the conductor, who had been working with—and against—engineers for thirty-five years, said, "I'll take the chance." Meantime the fireman had got the engine good and hot, quite literally trembling to go. The engineer finally had the lubricator feeding just right, and replaced the water-glass bulb in its socket with the air of a man who has all night to do it, settled on his air cushion like a concert pianist on his adjustable stool, and, gaping back into the gloom for the rear brakeman's signal, pulled the whistle lever twice with sharp imperiousness. The lantern flashed in a high arc, and the rest was up to the locomotive. Despite his sinister promise, the engineer idled at an insultingly lazy pace until the conductor, who had dropped to the ground, signaled that he was safely on the caboose. Then the train steamed majestically out of the yard, away from the glitter of the big city across the harbor, and onto the main line.

Even when it was bowling along at seventy-five miles an hour, there was nothing precipitous about its progress. The locomotive was just beginning to hit her natural stride. The caboose rolled with a dull, hollow note, accompanied by a whole orchestra of discordant, atrociously repetitious squeaks and groans, occasionally punctuated by an uneasy crash as the slack ran in; but for all this it rode with astonishing smoothness and ease, without calling our attention to the fact that it was putting a dozen miles behind us every ten minutes.

After picking up a couple of cars of Jersey merchandise at Elizabethport, a few miles out, we roared across New Jersey and the edge of Pennsylvania with sustained, indifferent swiftness, not slowing down until we hit the exasperating curves and dark canyons of Philadelphia, where we stopped for a few minutes. Here the engine and crews were changed. We had to get out while a fidgety switcher scuttled away with the caboose, only to come back a moment later with another caboose and three more cars—making twenty-five in all. They were hooked up; the new conductor "highballed" to the new engineer, and the train moved away in solitary dignity. This caboose goes through to Pittsburgh, and the crew and engine to Washington; the complete change was effected here because Number 117 runs over the Reading and Jersey Central between Philadelphia and Jersey City, and their locomotives and cabooses are not operated on the B. & O.

The *Merchandiser* rattled along at its swiftest sustained pace over the smooth, fairly curveless track between Philadelphia and Baltimore and Washington: the ninety-five miles between the former two were covered in 110 or 115 minutes, and some miles were run off in as little as forty-six seconds, outdistancing shamefully the speediest autos on the fine highway paralleling the track. About this time of the night it is also full of trucks. Looking out the caboose window, we could count within a couple miles a half-dozen of these lumbering machines, lit up with red and green lights like a Christmas tree, trailing a string of frustrated autos behind them.

"Each one of our cars," said Conductor Gerber, "holds three or four times as much as the biggest of those trucks." Which is a provocative statistic, for the twenty-five cars in Number 117 must be carrying seventy-five truckloads of goods (and Number 117 is only a quarter as long as most freight trains). Seventy-five trucks would demand seventy-five men, whereas this train gets along with a crew of four—engineer, fireman, brakeman, conductor. As for the costs, the train can be run out of pocket for less than a dollar a mile, and for around three dollars when everything except interest and dividends are counted. Eight cents or a dime a mile is about right for a large truck, and seventy-five trucks therefore would add up to six or seven dollars a mile. Nevertheless, these trucks are hauling a great deal of merchandise that the Baltimore & Ohio and other railroads would like to handle, but cannot because their prices are too high. To find out precisely why their prices are too high we should have to make a flagrantly optimistic excursion into the cockeyed and unreasonable abstraction known as the railroad-rate structure—an inscrutable edifice, ossified long before highway competition was a reality, which does not necessarily base price on cost, and so confronts America with the paradoxical spectacle of an expensive service often managing to undersell a cheaper one.

The *Merchandiser* ducked through Baltimore stealthily, stopping long enough only to pick up a few cars, to set out a rush car from New York, and let the engine have a drink of water. At Washington the locomotive was changed

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again, because a somewhat more powerful one is necessary on the grades between Washington and Pittsburgh. At 1:00 A. M. or a little before, it left for Cumberland, 144 miles to the northwest. Including a five-minute stop at Martinsburg for water, Engineer C. W. McDaniels made the run in three hours and two minutes. "She was feeling frisky tonight," he explained when he got off the engine, "so we beat the schedule by twenty-three minutes and one second." But nobody complained—least of all the crew. This is a lot different from the days when 144 miles was an all-night run in fast freight service, and three dollars was good money for it. Engineer McDaniels is paid $12.51, and Conductor McQuinn gets $10.16, while the fireman and brakeman knock down $9.62 and $8.12 respectively. By contrast, several of the brakemen who were laid off during the depression got jobs driving trucks. All work eight or ten hours a day, and only one of them earns as high as a dollar an hour.

Looking at it another way, Number 117's wages amount to nearly thirty cents a mile—the biggest single item in its sheer operating cost, they explain very neatly why long trains have been and still are the religion of operating officials. In fairness, the acceleration hasn't meant that the crews are enabled to perform their duties more quickly. The work merely has been compressed into a shorter period, and if anything the total amount of responsibility and strain has been increased.

The men in Number 117's caboose had to be on their toes; nearly every time the cars heeled to a curve, which was often, their heads were sticking out a window, peering through the rain, sniffing for signs of a "hot one." There was not much time for boiling coffee or frying bacon, none of the indolent atmosphere of the old-time "hack."

NOTE

The photographs on these three pages were taken for SCRIBNER'S by Bob Leavitt in the Jersey City yards—whence the B. & O.'s *Merchandiser* begins its swift run to Pittsburgh's Golden Triangle.

During the thirty-three miles out of Cumberland, Number 117 attacked the two-per-cent grade leading up to the crest of the Alleghenies, and with the aid of a helper engine coupled ahead, stormed up the hill at an average of over thirty-five miles an hour. At Sand Patch, the summit, the helper was disconnected, and the train dropped with cautious swiftness to the side of the winding Youghiogheny, which it followed in the twilight of dawn to its junction with the Monongahela. Engineer Ed Hayes, too, was making a fine run. He had wheeled her over the mountains from Cumberland to Connellsville in five minutes less than the streamlined, Diesel-powered *Capitol Limited* is allowed by timecard. So at Connellsville we had only fifty-six miles to go, and nearly two hours to make them in. Although we were held up by a local passenger train ahead, we drifted through a bloodshot haze of smoke and fog to a halt within a few steps of Pittsburgh's Golden Triangle with a dozen minutes to the good. And by nine o'clock the merchandise consigned to the Pittsburgh stores was being delivered.

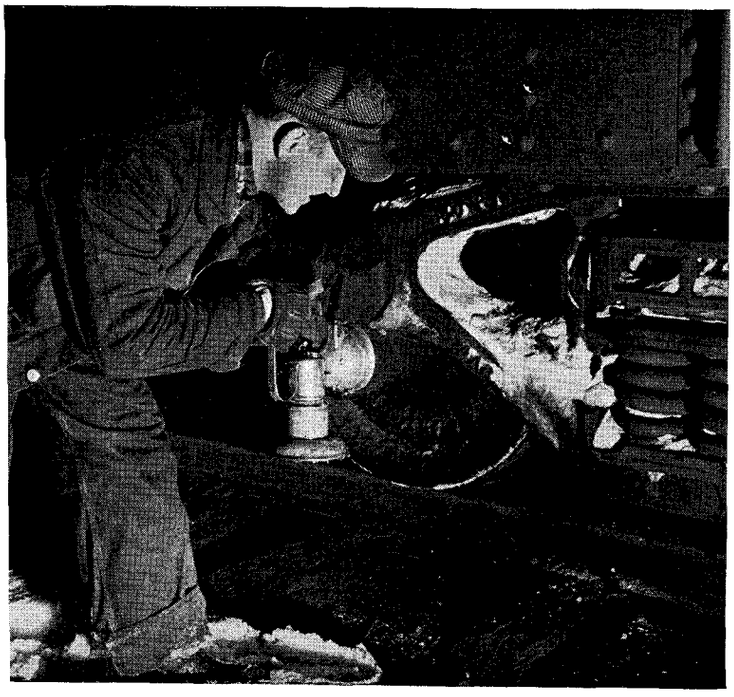
III

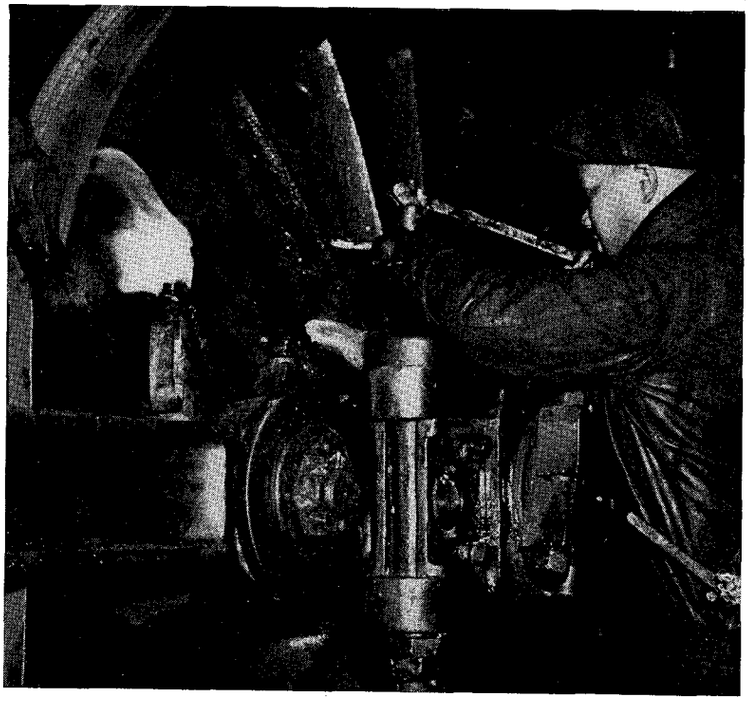
By rushing these twenty-five cars 525 miles at an overall average of about forty miles an hour, Number 117 lived up to its reputation of being one of the most profitable trains on the Baltimore & Ohio. Here is the way a simplified balance sheet of its activities for the night might look:

Gross revenue	$4500
Expenses	
Wages of crews	$ 150
Out-of-pocket	250
General-transportation expenses	1100
Total expenses	1500
Net Income	$3000

Two years ago when it inaugurated the *Merchandiser,* the B. & O. set its hopes low—perhaps a dozen cars in each direction. There were no fanfares, no announcements in the papers, no ceremonies. But the train met with almost instantaneous approval, for shippers learned to place an astonishing confidence in it. During the Christmas seasons, for instance, Pittsburgh department-store buyers were in the habit of making purchases in New York, assigning them to Number 117, and wiring a description back home. That very night, while the train was on its way, advertisements offering its cargo for sale were being printed in the morning papers.

And even (*continued on page* 40)





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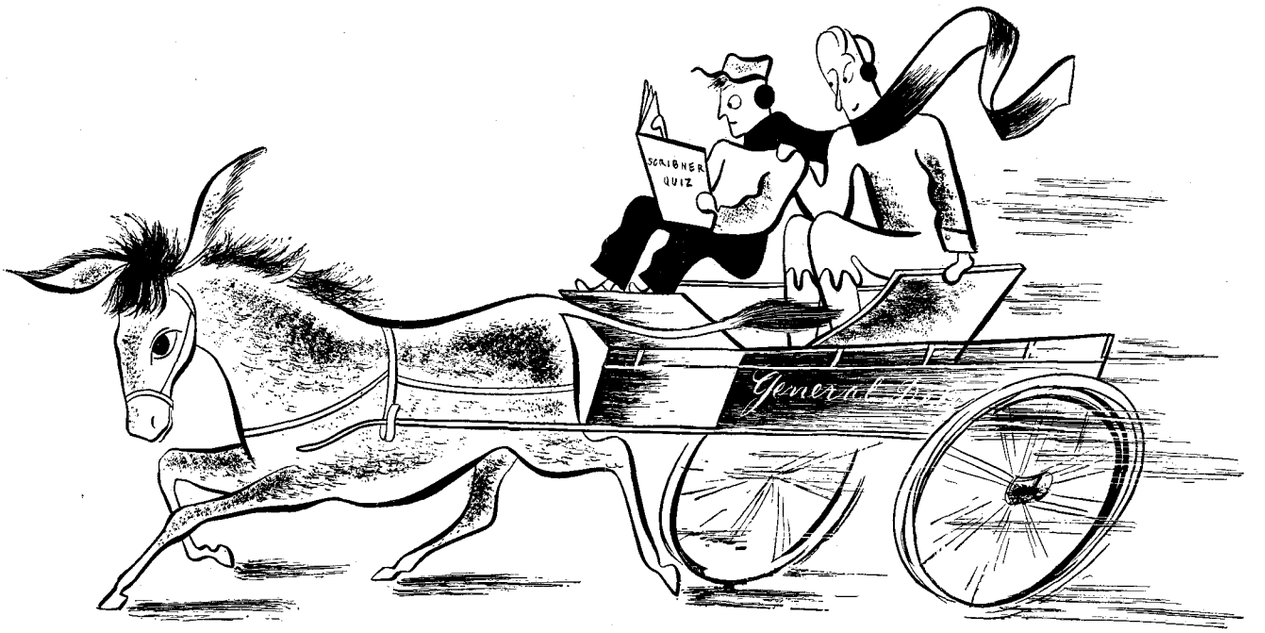

The Scribner Quiz

IRVING D. TRESSLER

FOR new readers, we include these directions for determining their S.Q. (*Scribner's Quotient*). Read each question. Check the answer you trust. When you have completed the fifty questions, look up the answers and deduct two points for each error. Subtract from 100 for your score. (*Answers on page* 64)

1. For years many foreign and U. S. ships have avoided going through the Panama Canal because of the:

(1) extremely slow passage (2) expense
(3) dangerous angles (4) shallowness
(5) shark-infested locks (6) narrowness

2. To most of us Mrs. John Hertz is best known for her:

(1) novels about the Southwest
(2) racing stables (3) paintings
(4) famous $250,000 Kohinoor Diamond

3. Which one of these pun-cracks doesn't apply to the late president of the scandal-involved McKesson & Robbins?

(1) "The high Coster living didn't pay"
(2) "He loved the Lyme light"
(3) "His suicide was a fitting Philip"
(4) "He couldn't face the Musica"

4. If someone invented a bathroom guest towel which really looked as though it should be used, he would apply for a patent to the following Department:

(1) Treasury (2) Post Office (3) State
(4) Labor (5) Commerce (6) Interior

5. Most submarines, when submerged, are propelled by:

(1) Diesel engines (2) fuel-oil motors
(3) gasoline engines (4) electric motors
(5) compressed-air engines (6) oars

6. "Every time someone taps out Uvalde, Texas, on me," said the typewriter, "I think of:

(1) the home of Vice-President Garner"
(2) the birthplace of Secretary Wallace"
(3) the richest oil fields in the world"

7. Did you know that the total number of U. S. Navy officers and men killed in action, dying of wounds, or lost at sea during the World War was approximately:

(1) 150 (2) 10,200 (3) 850 (4) 4350

8. Until his recent pardon, Tom Mooney had been in prison since 1916 for his alleged part in:

(1) the Black Tom dock explosion in N. J.
(2) the holdup of a U. S. mail truck
(3) a San Francisco parade bombing

9. Before going into a behind-the-newspaper sulk the husband snorted, "I suppose you also know that Neville Chamberlain's predecessor as Prime Minister was:

(1) Ramsay MacDonald" (2) Lloyd George"
(3) H. H. Asquith" (4) Stanley Baldwin"
(5) Anthony Eden" (6) Samuel Hoare"

10. This coming season, all professional baseball players are going to:

(1) wear long pants with roomy seats
(2) use a bat one-half inch thicker
(3) celebrate baseball's centennial
(4) use a ball two ounces heavier

11. If Teddy Roosevelt was the youngest U. S. President inaugurated during this century, then the oldest was:

(1) Harding (2) Wilson (3) Taft
(4) Coolidge (5) F.D. Roosevelt (6) Hoover

12. Until it was disbanded last September, many American youths fighting for Loyalist Spain were in the ..... Brigade:

(1) Thomas Jefferson (2) Abraham Lincoln
(3) John Reed (4) Andrew Carnegie
(5) William Randolph Hearst

13. When you sing "I've Been Workin' On the Railroad," you state that you have been working for the purpose of:

(1) hearing Dinah blow her horn
(2) earning an honest daily living
(3) passing the time away

14. The newly opened San Francisco World's Fair is built on:

(1) a portion of the city's Presidio
(2) an old rubbish dump in the suburbs
(3) concrete piles set into the water
(4) an island in San Francisco Bay

15. Unless he has changed jobs in the past month, James Roosevelt's latest position is:

(1) Editor of True New Deal Stories
(2) Secretary National Democratic Party
(3) Vice-president with Samuel Goldwyn, Inc.
(4) Assistant Secretary of the Bureau of Foreign and Domestic Commerce

16. Only one of these words does not mean that a woman is with child:

(1) gravid (2) precocial
(3) enceinte (4) gestating

17. Late in 1938 the foreign ministers of France and Germany met and signed a pact pledging:

(1) friendly, good-neighborly relations
(2) mutual aid in the Far East
(3) co-operation in armament reduction

18. In American mines the elevator which lowers miners to the working levels is usually called:

(1) the drop box (2) the Otis Pullman
(3) the cage (4) the rake (5) the rip

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19. Only about one person out of six knows that there are usually .... squares on a checker board.

(1) 100 (2) 50 (3) 64 (4) 72 (5) 49

20. "Terpsichore" is a favorite word with newspaper reporters, but most of them don't know it's pronounced:

(1) Terp-SICK-oh-ree (2) Terp-sih-CORE
(3) Terpsee-CORE-ree (4) TERP-sih-core

21. The Endicott Johnson Corporation in upstate New York is the second largest maker of ..... in the U. S.:

(1) hosiery (2) dog leashes (3) shoes
(4) hats (5) silverware (6) toothpaste

22. The expenses of Anthony Eden's visit to this country were largely met by the:

(1) United Lovers of the English Accent
(2) National League of Women Voters
(3) Amer. League for Peace & Democracy
(4) National Assoc. of Manufacturers

23. "Oh, that's simply divine picot!" gushed the guest, pointing at her hostess':

(1) china (2) lace blouse edging
(3) porcelain bridge work (4) rug

24. Which one of these regions was sought in recent anti-French demonstrations in the Italian Chamber of Deputies?

(1) Madagascar (2) Capri (3) Tunisia
(4) Morocco (5) Algeria (6) Crete

25. Which of these classes is most numerous in the United States?

(1) horses (2) mules (3) sheep
(4) cattle (5) swine (6) roadhogs

26. Ordinarily one of these famous writers or painters is not considered a satirist:

(1) Thackeray (2) Hogarth (3) Victor Hugo
(4) Bernard Shaw (5) Swift (6) Voltaire

27. Gastroscopes have been used for some time, now, and very handy they are for:

(1) peering into the iris of the eye
(2) viewing the interior of the stomach
(3) examining the tonsils and palate
(4) spotting a worm in an apple

28. Harry Hopkins' successor as WPA Administrator is named:

(1) Williams (2) Elliott (3) Jones
(4) Harrington (5) Berle (6) Wilson

29. While he might not thank you, it would still be correct to call one of these persons a gaffer:

(1) a waiter (2) a sheepherder
(3) an old man (4) a stevedore

30. "Madam," said the dentist, "I regret to say that you are a victim of caries," meaning that his patient suffered from:

(1) acid mouth (2) bleeding gums
(3) tooth decay (4) lonely molars

31. In only one of these places could you find an eruptive thermal spring:

(1) the rear of the new Buick
(2) Hot Springs, Ark. (3) Glacier Park
(4) Yellowstone Park (5) Saratoga Springs

32. A new $3,000,000 cigarette-paper mill will soon open in North Carolina in an effort to break the manufacturing monopoly of that product so long held by:

(1) France (2) China (3) England
(4) the New England states (5) India

33. *That's My Story* is the title of the recent book by:

(1) Jim Farley (2) Westbrook Pegler
(3) Sally Rand (4) Douglas Corrigan
(5) Gen. Hugh Johnson (6) Don Budge

34. Though illegal in most states, cockfighting is still popular here, and the chief weapons of each gamecock are:

(1) curved steel spikes on their spurs
(2) beaks filed to needle sharpness
(3) steel darts fastened on each claw

35. For years many wealthy sportsmen and scientific expeditions have gone hunting in Tanganyika, which is a:

(1) territory in East Africa (2) London bar
(3) state in India (4) part of Tibet

36. Don't breathe a word of this to anyone except a publicity man, but Rex Tugwell, the ex-New Dealer, is now:

(1) working for a molasses company
(2) heading New York City's Planning Commission
(3) teaching Economics at Harvard
(4) running a matrimonial agency in D. C.

37. Surveys have shown that the greatest proportion of U. S. citizens who gamble do it under the sponsorship of:

(1) churches (2) the Gov't. (3) racetracks
(4) men's clubs (5) police (6) pool halls

38. The death of Dr. Frank H. Vizetelly was a distinct loss to a world which needs ..... of his ability:

(1) geographers (2) oceanographers
(3) photographers (4) lexicographers
(5) paleontologists (6) ornithologists

39. Can you tell which one of these states has the correct capital city tacked after it?

(1) Idaho—Moscow (2) Oklahoma—Tulsa
(3) Utah—Ogden (4) Michigan—Detroit
(5) South Carolina—Columbia

40. Only occasionally today do you hear the old slang term "highroller" in reference to one who:

(1) spends freely in fast living
(2) lives lustfully in all sorts of sin
(3) is unduly attracted by women

41. At last the famous gold piano in the East Room of the White House has been replaced by:

(1) a Mack truck (2) a player piano
(3) an electric organ (4) a phonograph
(5) a new Steinway (6) a special radio

42. Ferdinand de Lesseps is famed not only for being the father of seventeen children, but for:

(1) building the Eiffel Tower
(2) designing the Brooklyn Bridge
(3) constructing the Suez Canal
(4) inventing paper diapers

43. What has happened to former King Alfonso XIII of Spain?

(1) He died two years ago in Paris
(2) He is living in Italy
(3) He is assisting the Loyalists
(4) He is living quietly in England

44. When a naval or military officer dresses in mufti it means he wears:

(1) something very sheer and lacy
(2) his most formal official uniform
(3) ordinary citizen's dress
(4) his regular everyday uniform

45. The ghost of Napoleon probably stays away from ..... because the battle of Waterloo was fought there:

(1) Germany (2) France (3) England
(4) The Netherlands (5) Belgium

46. Which one of these is a favorite breed of cattle in the U. S.?

(1) Porterhouse-Mignon (2) Thurber-Ross
(3) Aberdeen-Angus (4) Plymouth Rock
(5) Clydesdale (6) Tuffern-Lether

47. "Ps-s-s-t!" said the dictionary, "I'm here to prove that many kinds of snakes are oviparous, which means they:

(1) are poisonous" (2) live underground"
(3) lay eggs in order to reproduce"
(4) produce living young from the body"

48. Whenever you sleep on a percale sheet, relax; it's only another name for:

(1) an extra-high grade of linen
(2) a fine, closely woven cotton fabric
(3) a sheet other guests have used
(4) a fine, almost silk-like flannel

49. President Hutchins of the University of Chicago resigned from the N. Y. Stock Exchange Board because he believed that:

(1) Richard Whitney should be retried
(2) President Martin was incompetent
(3) the S. E. C. controlled it too tightly

50. If you were a beaver, you would have a tail that was:

(1) long, slender, and very tough
(2) fairly long, very flat, and broad
(3) short, furry, and quite thick

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LIFE IN THE U.S...*Photographic* VERMONT

In the February issue, SCRIBNER'S announced that it would henceforth devote the photographic section each month to pictures characterizing life in one of the forty-eight states. We began with New Mexico, then leapt across the continent, and now present six studies which were made in Vermont. All of them, we believe, have caught and faithfully recorded typical scenes in that state. For technical information on the following photographs, see page 62.

FULL MOON, by H. H. Robie

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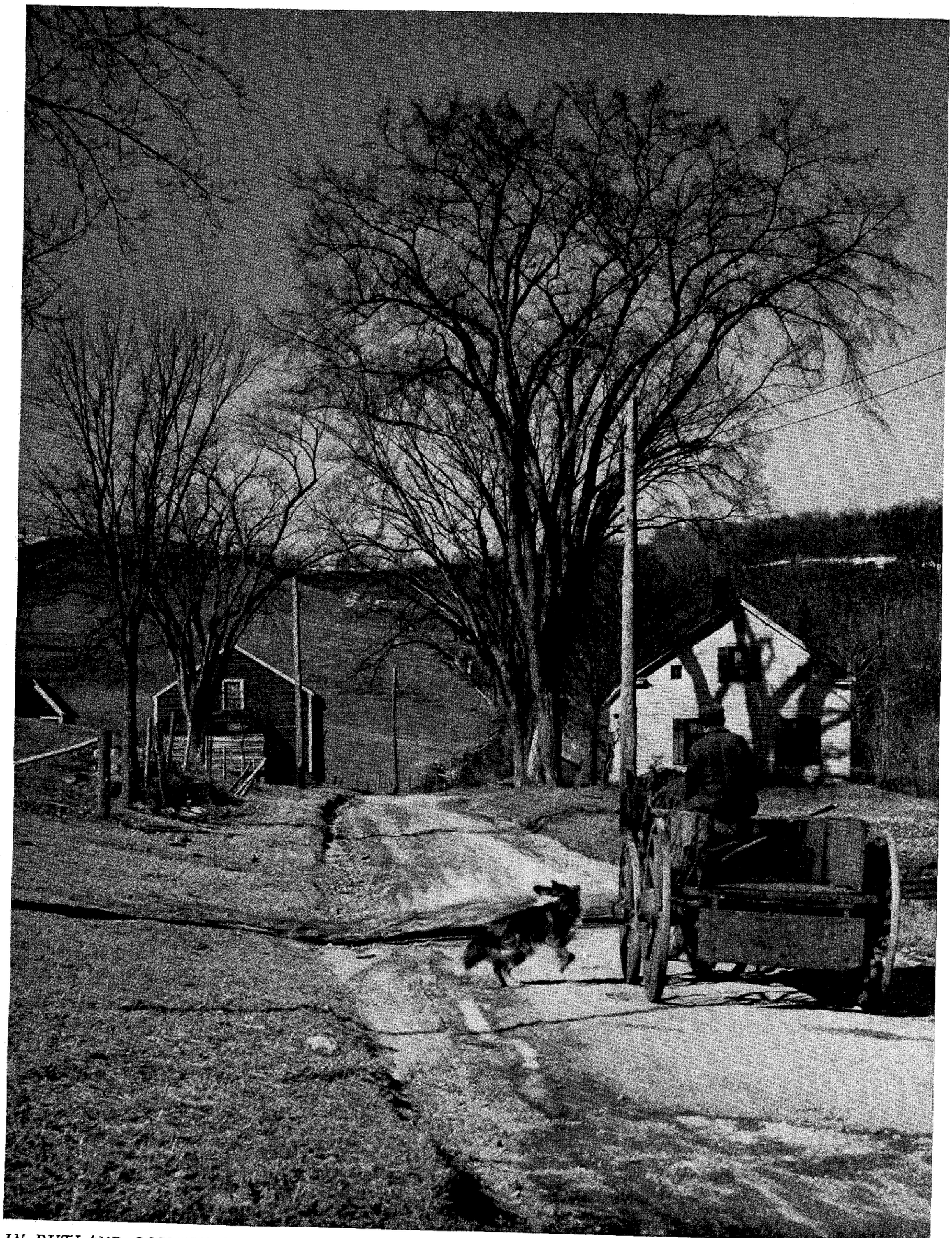

IN RUTLAND COUNTY, by Anton Kamp

BLACK STAR

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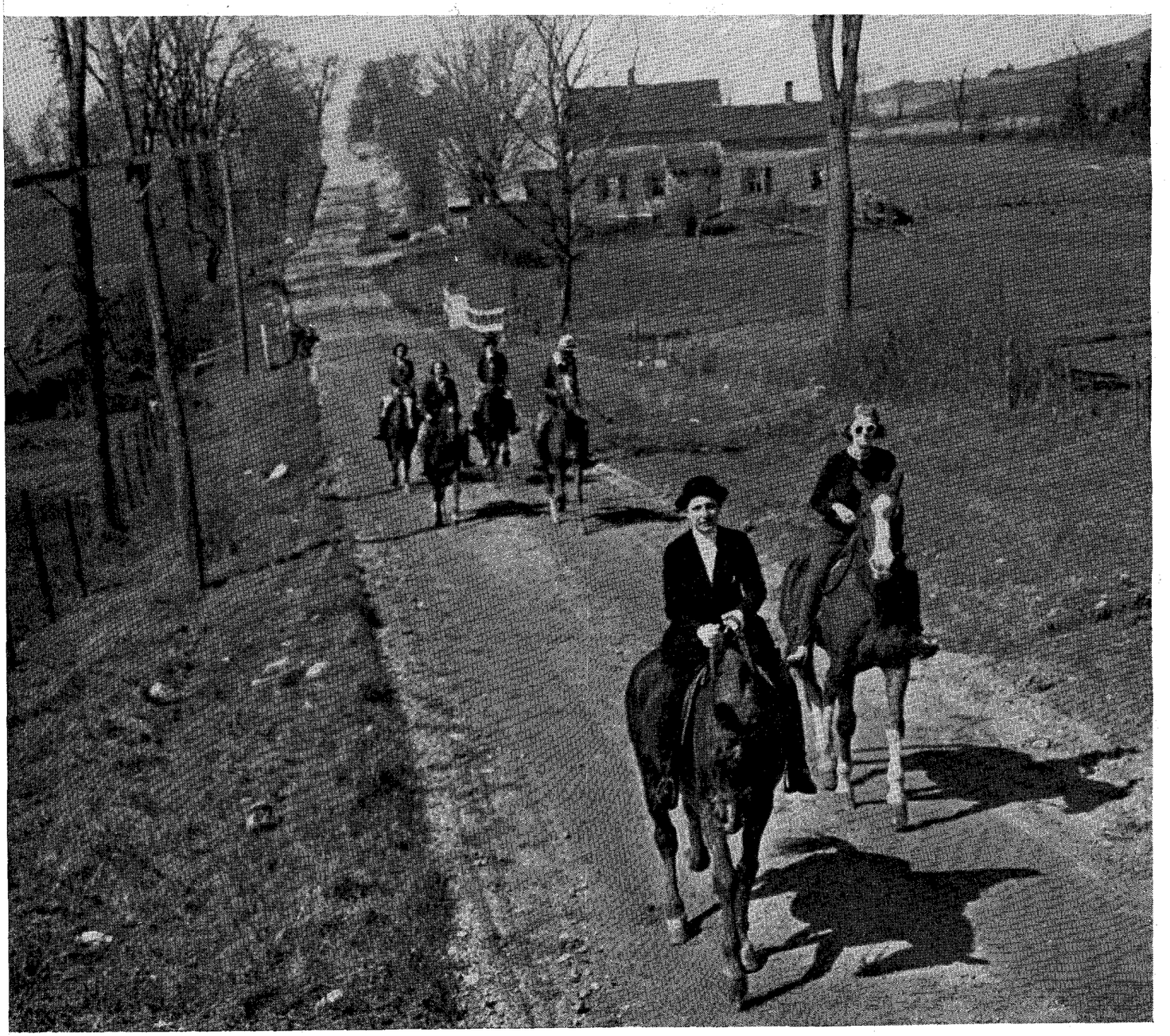

BACK ROAD, by Aldo Merusi

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WEST WIND, by Adelaide P. Fuller

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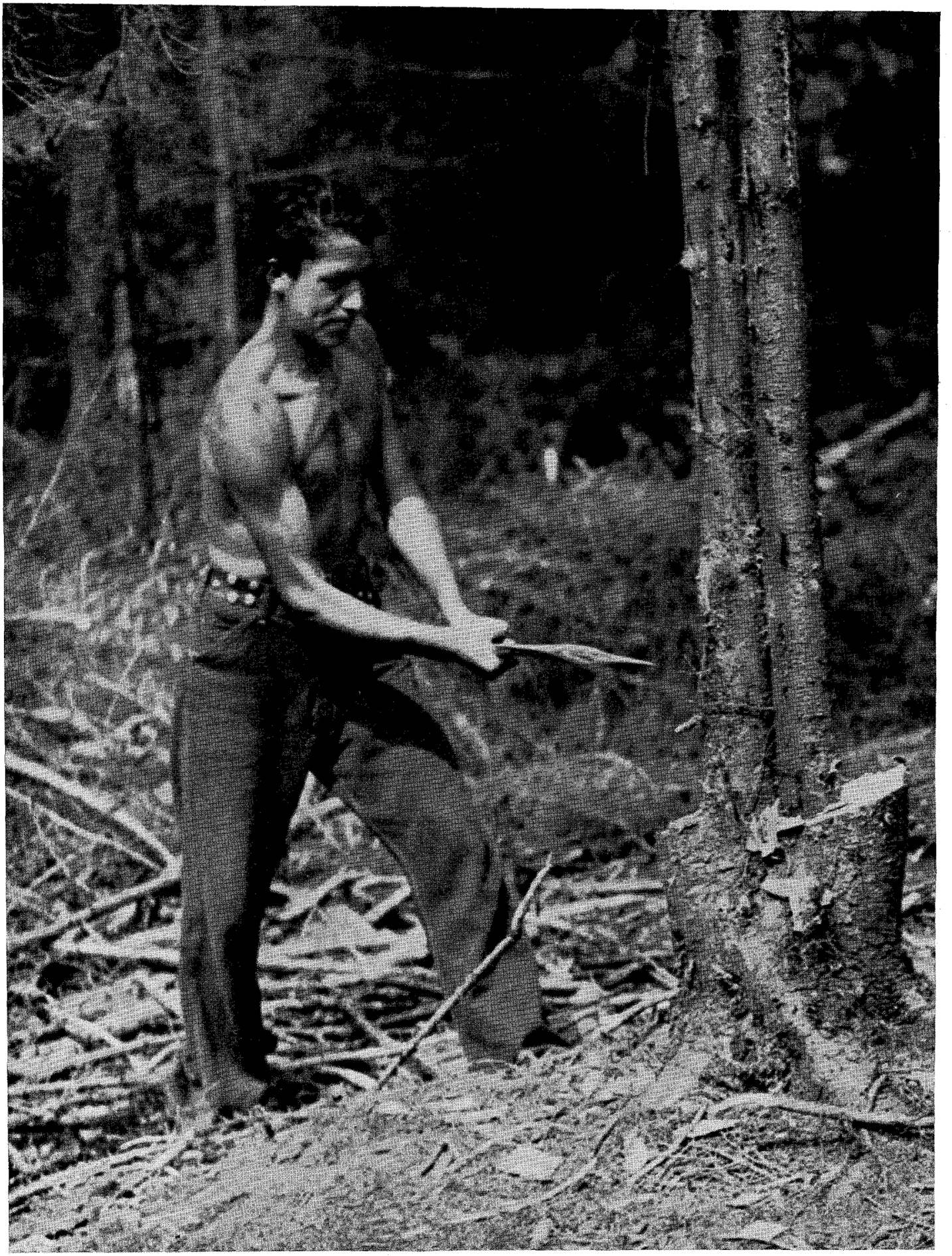

INDIAN WOODCUTTER, by Aldo Merusi

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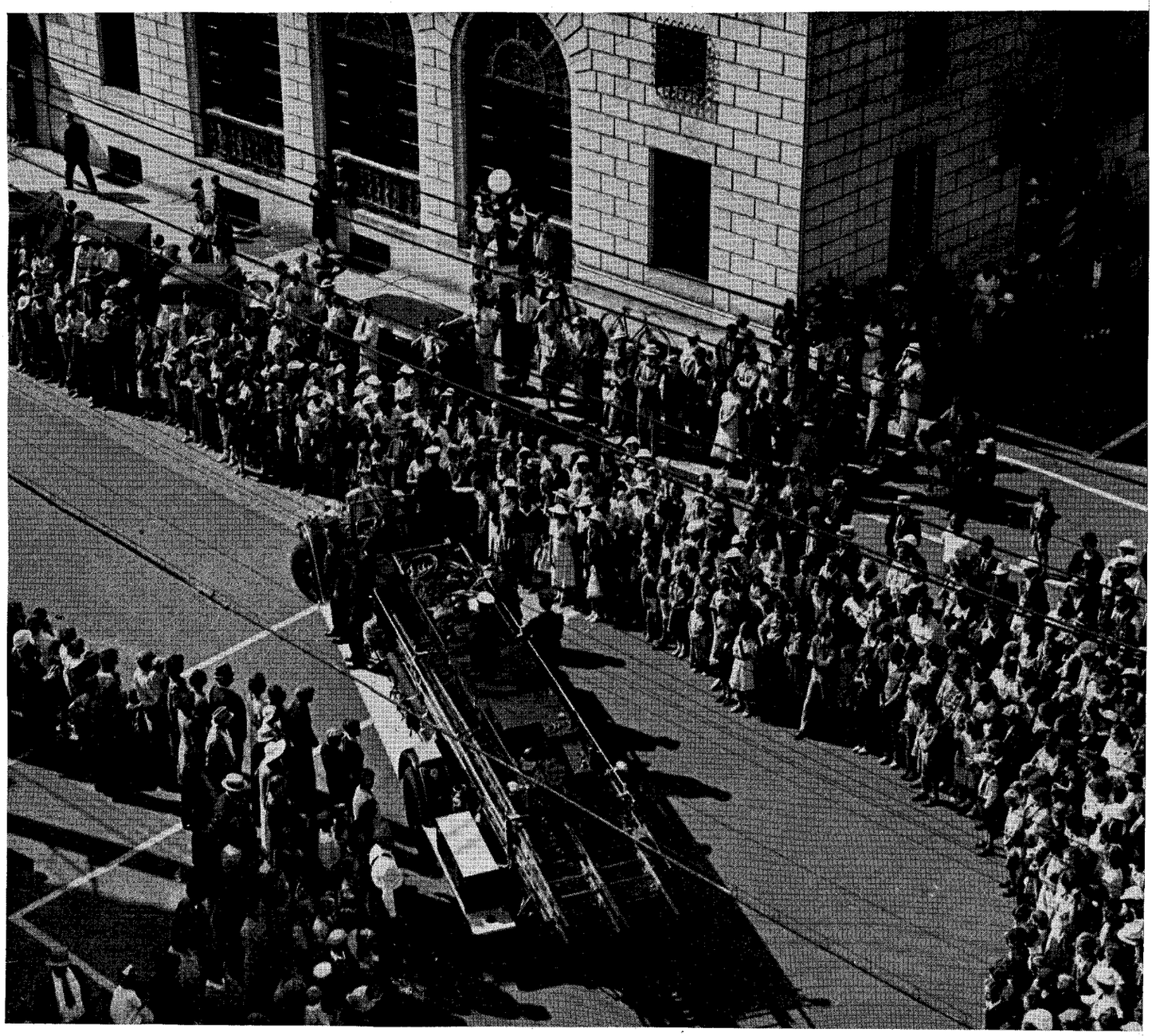

MAIN STREET, by Burt Foster

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"Big Broadcast of 1938"

(continued from page 15)

Interruption arrives in person of Mr. Struhumski. General humming in air which tells me that Mr. Struhumski is most important gentleman met to date.

"Mistah Struhumski, meet Mrs. Swingut! Mrs. Swingut, Mistah Struhumski, ouah production managuh. Colorful character we have heah, J. D. Yes, indeed! Colorful character!"

Mr. Struhumski bows, looking gracious but unconvinced. He and Mr. Liquid-Voice discuss details of evening's program. Then of coming one.

Little Fellow looks at watch. Liquid-Voice follows suit. It is twenty minutes to twelve. The script should have been written by now.

We go into a huddle. Liquid-Voice asks questions. Little Fellow (who proves not only to know tractors but wives of the men who buy them) chimes in with occasional suggestions. Three minutes is only three minutes. But not *too* short a time, we decide, to permit us to touch on these things—business competence of modern farm woman (her acquaintance with markets and legal terms, skill at catching market reports, etc.); her retention of individuality (well-nigh lost by city and small-town sister), this individuality showing up in dress, home, and home life, and lastly her own particular type of soil-sound, homey, cultural growth.

At one o'clock Little Fellow opens purse to expose huge rolls of ten-dollar bills from which he peels several. Sends me off, pocket stuffed with taxi fares, for lunch at Field's.

At 2:30 I am back. Liquid-Voice is in alcove, hair awry, looking dolefully at script, which Little Fellow and I read over his shoulder. Sentences appear to me childishly short, due undoubtedly to unfamiliarity with radio style.

"Now," says Liquid-Voice, "for revision."

So revision it is. I suggest. Little Fellow suggests. Liquid-Voice writes. Liquid-Voice shoves me to typewriter. I write.

Suddenly it is 5:30. Mr. Sweet, resplendent in evening togs, arrives to tell me I am going to cocktail party. I, in $15.98 knit suit from Wigdall's bargain basement, protest. Thirty minutes later we are knocking at the door of a Sheridan Road apartment high over the lake.

"Ladies and fellows, meet my star performer!" (Fifteen-ninety-eight Knit Suit, meet ninety-eight-dollar Bouffant Taffetas from Field's French Room. Bouffant Taffetas, meet Bargain Knit.)

Bouffant Taffetas gaily gracious but with curiosity shallow in their eyes. (Bouffant Taffetas' lives probably circumscribed in their own fashion, as mine is in mine.) I hold cocktail, which I daren't sip. Even *one* certain to give tongue trouble. Retreat to chintz-hung window looking practically down on lake. President of Something-or-Other asks if I like waves. Discuss waves.

"Oh, Mr. Sweet, what time were we to be back at the studio? Six-thirty, wasn't it?"

"Here, here now. I'm taking care of that." Wagging a finger. "Who's job depends upon this, anyway? Not yours. Mine. Now, don't be nervous."

But Mr. Sweet overly optimistic. We race into audition room just as studio orchestra is laying aside instruments. In control room find Mr. Struhumski putting finishing touches on what proves to be my script. This I scan eagerly. Am puzzled. Skim back pages. Try first ones again. Note only a *suggestion* of familiar ideas—*no* familiar phrases. The rest trite, formal, wooden.

"Remember," breathes Mr. Sweet in my ear. "If there's anything you don't like, change it. What you say goes." Fifteen minutes to broadcasting time. I am handed this and told that anything I want goes.

Mr. Liquid-Voice, Mr. Sweet informs me in an aside, is nothing but a script writer. Tried to run the whole show. He and Mr. Struhumski had words. Mr. Struhumski had tossed him out. *With* his script. The one I had was written, as I had suspected, by New York-reared, metropolitan Mr. Struhumski.

Mr. Barnes, the announcer, and I practice a first paragraph. Mr. Barnes is country-appearing, city-reared, gentian-eyed, sunny-tempered. I cough—rather badly.

"Nervous, Mrs. Swingert?"

I answer truthfully, "I don't know."

Suddenly I am alone. Mr. Struhumski is bowing at the door.

"Ready, Mrs. Swingert?"

"Am I," I murmur, "going to rehearsal?"

"You are," hisses Mr. Struhumski, sweeping me through the studio door, "on the air."

Lights, laughter out front, a sort of tense informality on stage. I am seated on mid-platform between two people whom I do not know. The orchestra is playing. Ward Barnes waving his baton. Out front the Family Fun audience is singing *Down by the Old Mill Stream.* Mr. Gallio, orchestra conductor, is being given little signals by Mr. Struhumski from the glassed-in control room. What fun to watch it all. If there weren't such mad need for me to scan these unfamiliar, cursedly awkward lines.

Presently Sally Sanders is singing—barely whispering into the microphone. From where I sit, not twelve feet away, I can scarcely hear her at all. Yet last Saturday night her voice had come into my home round and sweet, quite filling our big living room.

Mr. Barnes is beckoning. Now I am at the microphone, facing him. He gives me a great, deep wink. . . . "And so, Family Fun audience, Farnham and Farnham bring you tonight a real personality—a lady whom you know—by the name of Mary Jane Swingert. We're glad to have you with us, Mary Jane." (He winks again.)

"And I'm glad to be here, Ward."

"And, now, tell us . . ."

And so we are off. Not heroically—but off. My knees stop rocking. I explain that I am from a small town, that my friends are, chiefly, farm folks. Mr. Barnes feigns enthusiasm—queries me—his voice so sincere, so genuine, I find myself at times almost looking up from my script and answering naturally in my own words—saying things as I, not Mr. Struhumski, would have said them. Several times Mr. Struhumski's ponderous pleasantries barely avoid jamming my throat.

I am back in my seat, the rapid patter of Family Fun audience applause a little shock in my ears. The program goes on. Then—quite suddenly, it is over. One second of electric silence, then confusion. Confusion everywhere. Everywhere handshaking and congratulations.

"Your voice," says Mr. Struhumski, striding from the booth, "came in BE-U-tifully, Mrs. Swingert—BE-U-tifully."

I do not add, "And *your* script."

Mr. Barnes grabs my hand, "Well, well, well, Mary Jane. You got yourself a *national* reputation tonight."

Mr. Sweet is holding my coat. Sally Sanders murmurs sweetly that I was "WONderful." Back at my elbow the

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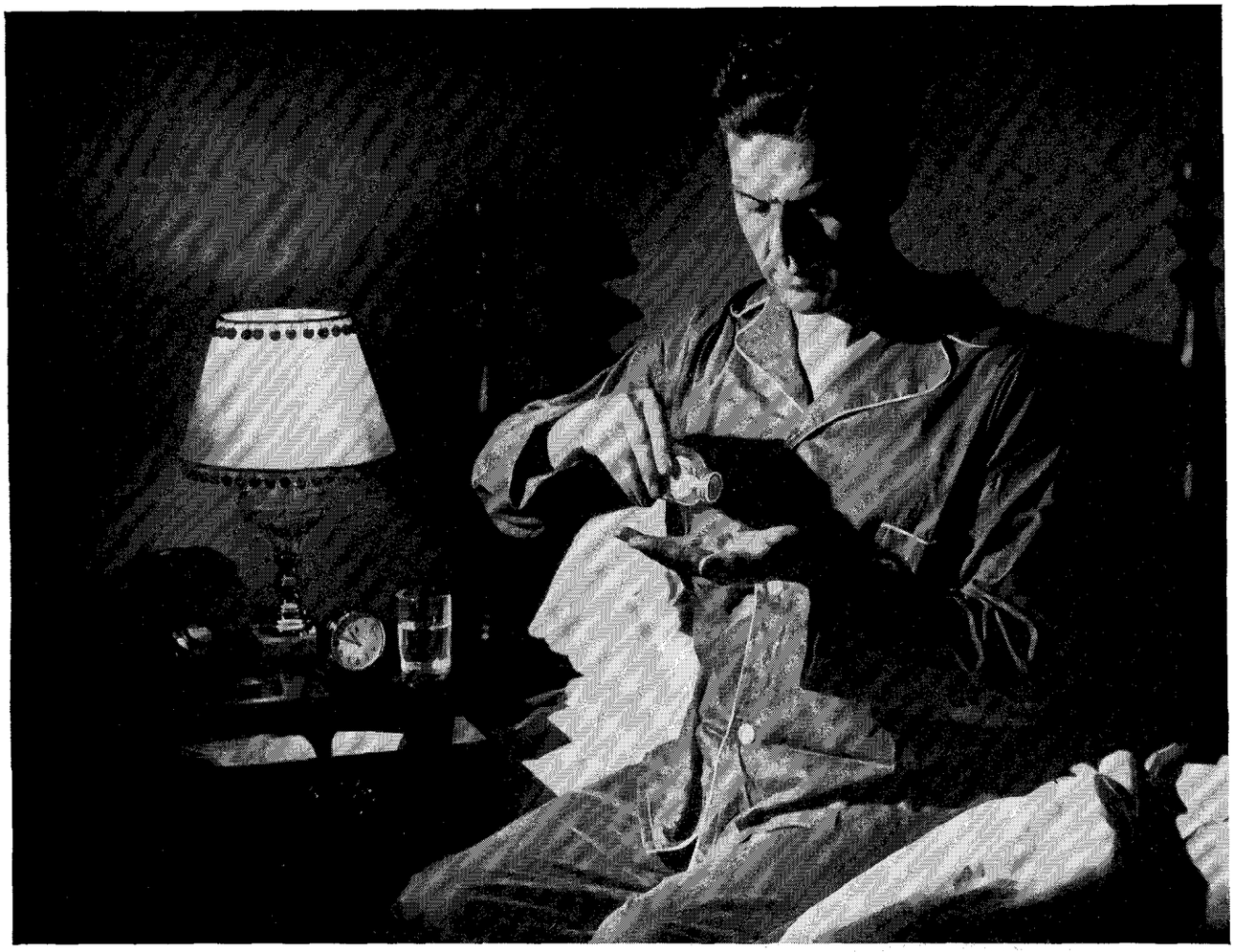

Don't trifle with chronic INDIGESTION

Be Examined!

INDIGESTION is not a disease in itself—but it may be a symptom of serious disease. It is one of nature's danger signals.

To ignore chronic indigestion, or to treat it with self-prescribed medicines, is always unwise. But it is especially risky in middle life.

Recently several thousand dyspeptic sufferers were studied at a large American clinic and the underlying causes of their indigestion analyzed. Particularly among patients over forty, a serious condition such as gastric or intestinal ulcer, gall bladder disease, cancer, or heart disease was frequently found to be the cause of their "stomach trouble."

Among younger people, too, recurrent indigestion may be due to disease. But more often it results from neglect of simple rules of health. Common causes are improper selection of food, hasty eating, over or undereating, lack of exercise, defective teeth, fatigue and, in particular, excessive worry or emotional stress.

The thing to keep in mind is that chronic indigestion, at *any* age, is always a symptom of something wrong. Whether or not the "something wrong" is serious, only your doctor can determine. If your digestive disturbances are caused by disease, habitual self-dosing with pills or cathartics may delay a cure or actually imperil your chance of recovering.

To determine the underlying causes, your physician will require a careful physical examination and a thorough analysis of your symptoms—perhaps even X-ray photographs and other laboratory studies.

Whether the cause is an organic disease, or a "functional" disorder which a change in living habits will correct, your physician may be of most help if you visit him in time.

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Little Fellow is saying meekly that they're saying in the audition room we'd topped last week's program.

Suddenly resentment falls away from me. They seem so sincere. After all, it's just a game. And they're like children! All the halloo and balloo about nothing. All the front and fuss and grave delight. And a thousand Saturday-nighters over the land had yawned and switched off their radios. Or waited charitably— But who cared? It had been fun.

*

Two days later, I am home. As the porter swings my bags down from the cool shadow of the streamliner to our own sun-drenched platform, a familiar voice hollers:

"Damn it, I think I'll have to get me a red coat, too. Where ya bin?"

It is only the village unfortunate, welcoming me home. But his special service at this moment is to remind me—with a little shock—that for some strange reason my camel's-hair coat has lost its vivid significance—has retreated, in fact, into that shadowed and uncertain realm where coats are coats, born chiefly to cover, and with no cataclysmic or Freudian implications.

The next day I am at the library. Inside the hallway a firm hand grabs mine. It is Elizabeth Hursh, her smile warm as a Teutonic Goddess of Friendship's. "We were proud of you, Mary, proud of you. Your voice came in like a bell. —No—you don't have to tell me. I know—we knew—that *you* didn't write that script."

Inside at the desk, Miss Miland eyes me with suspicious decision. "It isn't as though we really *were* a small town, Mrs. Swingert," she was saying. "Two thousand, you know. And you saying it *over the air* that way—*that's* what didn't set so well with folks. And your voice, they say didn't sound none like you—though I didn't—" she drifts off to uncertainty, then reaches under the desk with customary purpose. "And we've got something here, needs your attention—a book you'll want to take off, I know. It's got [blush] a woman havin'—"

And suddenly, for some inexplicable reason, I find that rebellion has gone out of me. In spite of my coat, my trip, my little forays into mutiny—little daggers drawn—I am no longer a rebel. At last —and my little flight into ether has been not the least important among alchemists—at last I am completely subdued.

(continued from page 19)

together at least 140 ideas for gossipy inside stories of Hollywood personalities, savoring preferably of scandal. Of Paramount's quota of thirty-five stories a month, *Union Pacific* yielded more than its fair share by reason of the several big-name personalities in the cast. De Mille, for instance, was prevailed upon to reveal "Things I've Never Told Before About Hollywood," in a series of three articles each featuring a tie-in with the picture. Joel McCrea, with a leading rôle in the picture, undertook to tell "What Makes Love Tick." The angle with the fan magazines is to furnish ideas to the fifty-five accredited fan-magazine writers working in Hollywood and let these scribes peddle the ideas to their editors.

During the filming of *Zaza*, Gretchen Messer, the Paramount fashion and beauty editor, stumbled onto a natural which she hopes to duplicate with *Union Pacific*. For the former picture, Wally Westmore, Paramount's chief make-up expert, developed the "Zaza hair-do," with the curls piled high on the top of the head. Perc Westmore, holding a similar job at Warner Brothers, denounced the new hair dress as ridiculous, preposterous, and iniquitous, and the issue between the brothers became such a tempest in Hollywood that Miss Messer was able to plug "Zaza hair-do" into a new rage.

Union Pacific styles haven't produced another Hollywood tempest, yet, but the rugged leather clothing designed for the end-o'-track society lends itself to new sports wear for women, and Miss Messer is plugging the 1867 flannel shirt with careless collar and side fastening, metal buttons in the shape of cartridges, lipstick and vanity cases shaped like tiny pistols the hussies used to wear in the rip-roaring railroad towns. Another fashion angle is the tin dinner pail, carried in Union Pacific days. The publicists saw to it that Miss Stanwyck took the tin dinner pail back to Hollywood, where it is the custom of the stars to have their lunches sent in to the studio. Stanwyck enjoyed her lunch from a dinner pail so much that others followed suit. And what Hollywood affects, the world copies, if the publicity machine does its stuff.

In the parlance of the press division, this is known as "making news," and not as "press agentry." The easiest way to break a motion-picture publicist's heart is to refer to him as a press agent. To him that connotes the old-time, back-slapping, liquor-dispensing circus press agent. A studio publicity man takes the position that what happens in the mythical town of Hollywood is news and that his job is the professional service of making that news more easily available. Entertainment of writers, editors, and commentators is a minor part of his task. Both the publicity men and the Hollywood correspondents are too overworked to waste much energy in the kind of entertaining in which the old-fashioned press agent specialized. About the only bait a movie publicity department has on its hook is the cherished pass through the studio gates for privileged visitors and tickets to previews of important pictures.

After all, it is a terrific service to editors, when energetic Steve Brooks, through a news photographer assigned to each company, rounds up "news pix" for *Life*, *Look*, *Click*, and the rotogravure sections of the Sunday newspapers. It's terrific when Harry Cottrell, who with two other portrait men in the "still department," can persuade Bing Crosby to come in for an hour once a year to be shot. The stars all have their "still" foibles—Dietrich demands a full-length mirror, so she can see all that the camera is getting; Stanwyck insists on okaying proofs of her stills, but rarely kills one; McCrea is a swell guy who will pose for 120 shots at one sitting; Gary Cooper hates smiling pix; Frances Farmer won't pose for "glamour" stills, and so on. But if editors want the stuff, the press division gets the pix, even if they have to do it with a candid camera.

It's the same with the "gossip columns." They have to be spicy and factful, and sometimes they arouse the ire of the mighty. The Paramount press crowd turns out three of these Hollywood columns—one by John Del Valle, a second by mythical Dave Keene, and the woman's side of Hollywood by the equally mythical Dorothy Sharpe. Keene and Sharpe, though merely nom de plumes, are broadminded enough to include in their columns considerable gossip of other studios, so that newspapers can use the stuff as coming from their own Hollywood correspondent, even if it is

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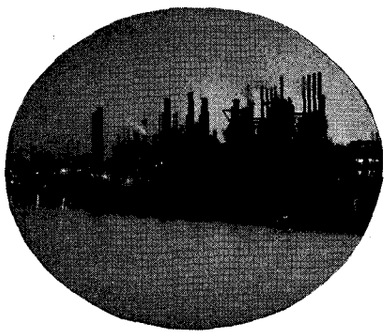

The Bethlehem Steel Quiz

TRY IT ON THE FAMILY

Language is local. It is colored by custom, climate and occupation. This month's Bethlehem Steel Quiz takes a swing around the map. A question which is easy for Houston may furrow the brows of Boston, and vice versa.

Score 10 for each question answered correctly. A score of 50 is a passing grade. An economics teacher or a business man may feel pleased at a mark of 80. Wives should not ask the help of husbands on more than two questions, if at all. School children should do better than their elders.

Correct answers on page 64.

1. Texans and Oklahomans know more about many subjects than wiseacres in the East. In Tulsa, for example, most of the citizens are familiar with the term "seamless casing." Seamless casing is:

(*a*) *The skin of frankfurters sold at roadside stands along highways in the Southwest.*
(*b*) *A welded steel tank for gasoline storage.*
(*c*) *A nightshirt woven in one piece, without stitching.*
(*d*) *A kind of steel pipe used in the drilling of oil wells.*
(*e*) *A hermetically sealed Indian tomb.*

2. Louisiana people have their special fields of knowledge, also. Thousands of citizens of that state could answer promptly that a "sucker rod" is:

(*a*) *A stick for smiting unsophisticated visitors at the Mardi Gras.*
(*b*) *A stainless steel swizzle stick for stirring mint juleps.*
(*c*) *A steel rod used in oil well pumping.*
(*d*) *An underworld phrase referring to a gun in the hands of an amateur.*

3. The personnel of the metal working and motor industries in Michigan should be able to state in which of the following sentences the word felloe could be used correctly.

(*a*) *For he's a jolly good.....*
(*b*) *Because of his fine scholarship at Ann Arbor he has been elected a.....in metallurgy.*
(*c*) *In a steel wheel, a.....is the outer rim of the wheel proper.*

4. Citizens of Wyoming are generally aware that one of the following steel products can be purchased by the mile:

(*a*) *rails* (*b*) *steel roofing* (*c*) *wire rope* (*d*) *barbed wire*

5. Many sections of Pennsylvania, West Virginia, Ohio and Southern Illinois are "coal conscious." The mining personnel in these regions would define "abrasion-resisting plate" as:

(*a*) *The home plate in the World's Series.*
(*b*) *A grade of steel frequently used in chutes.*
(*c*) *A trade name for the plating of Sheffield ware in plant restaurants.*

6. Through Maryland, Virginia, the Carolinas, in upstate New York, in fact wherever by-products are near at hand, farmers use a chemical fertilizer which is a by-product of the coke oven, namely:

(*a*) *sodium chloride* (*c*) *ammonium sulphate*
(*b*) *cyanide of potassium* (*d*) *bicarbonate of soda*
(*e*) *bichloride of mercury*

7. Steel fence posts are used extensively in the Northwest, the Corn Belt, and wherever strong, durable installation is required. There is one kind of livestock for which strong fencing is especially needed. This kind has been publicized recently by a proper name:

(*a*) *Petroushka* (*d*) *Kosciusko* (*g*) *Karenina*
(*b*) *Ferdinand* (*e*) *Chrysostom* (*h*) *Dryden*
(*c*) *Milquetoast* (*f*) *Abigail* (*i*) *Faraday*

8. Florida's vast fruit packing industry is one of the world's largest consumers of:

(*a*) *steel sheet piling* (*d*) *drop forgings*
(*b*) *bolts and nuts* (*e*) *wire nails*
(*c*) *sheet steel* (*f*) *pipe*

9. Choose from the following one-syllable words a blast furnace by-product which is handled extensively by roofing-material dealers in New England and New York:

(*a*) *slag* (*b*) *crag* (*c*) *shag* (*d*) *snag* (*e*) *sprag*

10. What steel company, now exhibiting at the Golden Gate International Exposition, has steel plants at Los Angles, San Francisco, and Seattle; and shipyards at San Francisco Harbor and San Pedro Harbor (Port of Los Angeles)?

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weighted with Paramount angles. The same is true of the studio's radio letter to broadcasting stations and news letters to newspapers. They cover the whole filmland front.

The cost of putting the "terrific" touch on *Union Pacific* and similar pictures is in itself terrific. The salary budget of the Paramount publicity department runs about $2500 a week. Pix cost around $3500 a week net, including $500 alone for mailing them to users. Telegraph and telephone, supplies, preview costs, transportation, etc., run up to another $2000. In all, half a million a year. On the basis of thirty pictures a year, Paramount averages about sixteen grand per picture for publicity. But the boys went to town on *Union Pacific,* and probably spent two or three times the usual amount on this picture. However, since almost all pictures run in theaters on the percentage basis, it means money at the box office to give everybody and everything connected with a picture the works in the way of a build-up. Nothing less will do.

"The job," as Mr. De Lapp put it, "is to take a flea and build him up into a front-page personality."

"We actually did that," he added, thoughtfuly, "with Sammy and Sadie, two trained fleas imported from New York's famous flea circus to work in *Zaza.* Before we got through with them, those fleas were terrific."

Fast Freight

(continued from page 27)

as the *Merchandiser* hurries toward Pittsburgh, still another fast freight is making the same run on another line. The Pennsylvania's LCL-1 and LCL-2 carry even more freight than the B. & O.'s, but because the Pennsylvania line is direct—seventy-seven miles shorter—these trains do not match the *Merchandiser* in miles per hour.

But neither the B. & O.'s *Merchandiser,* the fastest l.c.l. train, nor the Pennsylvania's LCLs, which are the heaviest and most profitable, was the innovator in this field. Perhaps the first solid less-than-carload train of this kind was the *Blue Streak,* of the Cotton Belt line, which burst upon the world in the fall of 1931. It leaves St. Louis at dinner time, averages forty miles an hour through the rolling hinterlands of southeast Missouri and Arkansas to arrive at Texarkana before noon, guaranteeing delivery, with a co-ordinated truck service, in most of Texas and Arkansas the same day.

Similar swift trains followed. The Southern Pacific's *Coast Merchandiser,* nicknamed the *Zipper* by S. P. employees, blasting its way over the mountains between San Francisco and Los Angeles; the Illinois Central's *Merchandise Special,* running off the 528 miles between Chicago and Memphis in twelve hours and fifty minutes, and thus outspeeding all save one of its passenger trains between the two points; the Frisco's enormously successful *Flash,* between St. Louis and Tulsa and Oklahoma City; the four competing transports between New York City and Buffalo: one on the direct but hilly Lackawanna; another on the Erie; the third on that inveterate coal road, the Lehigh Valley; the fourth on the New York Central. The *Merchandiser* of the N. Y. C. runs the fastest, making the trip in less than eleven hours. Consisting of the same type of engines that haul the *Twentieth Century Limited* and old milk cars (no longer in milk traffic, since the trucks got that), it has been known to roll up the broad Hudson from Harmon to Rensselaer, 108 miles, in as many minutes.

IV

All this is, of course, only one phase of American freight service. What the railroads have done with their other freight trains is equally dramatic and important. For example, the Santa Fe is today rushing California fruits and vegetables from the West Coast to Chicago in 130 hours—a full day less than the 1925 schedule. Ten years ago the fastest freight service between Kansas City and Chicago was nearly twenty-nine hours; today the Santa Fe drives a freight over this route in sixteen hours, forty-five minutes.

An entire article could be devoted to this subject without more than touching the surface. The Milwaukee Road has a freight train which jumps from Chicago to the Twin Cities in twelve hours; the New Haven operates one from Washington to Boston in only thirteen hours; etc. But back to the freight flyers of the *Merchandiser* type. Their prosperous blossoming indicates the possibilities of this new kind of swift less-than-carload service. As everybody knows, merchants are purchasing on a daily or weekly rather than a seasonal basis; inventories in every kind of business are being kept down. Less buying is done in carload lots, and the total available less-than-carload business constantly is expanding. If railroads had got half the increase that has occurred during the last twenty years, their gross revenues would be swollen by seven to ten per cent —300 to 400 million dollars a year—or nearly enough to pay all the fixed charges which plague some of them so severely.

Why haven't they had this lucrative business long before now? One answer is the aforementioned rate structure, probably the most formidable obstacle of all. All the experts agree that this structure could stand an overhauling, but none seems to have a workable scheme for doing it. Lest anyone be inclined to weep at this sad fix, it ought to be pointed out that railroads themselves have not been comparable exactly to godlike, innocent Gullivers, shackled to the earth by the malignant little devils of circumstance and unfair competition. To the credit of most railroad men, they would guffaw as loudly as anyone at the notion. For this is the bitter core they had to chew on: some shippers were actually paying more to send their stuff by truck because it was swifter and less trouble. In speaking to the Associated Traffic Clubs of America in 1931, J. R. Turney, vice-president of the Cotton Belt line, said, "We handle l.c.l. service as we did in the days of wood-burning locomotives and wooden axles, when trains tied up for darkness, and a speed of fifteen miles an hour was tempting Providence." That was not all. Railroads lost l.c.l. traffic long before trucks were thought of—first to the express companies, then to parcel post, and then to freight forwarders and consolidators, "who take our traffic by using our own facilities more efficiently than we use them ourselves. And now, while we whistle in the dark, trucks are taking what is left of our parcel business."

Embarrassing and blunt, but true. The way out? Obviously it was for railroaders to pack their indignation in moth balls, spit on their hands, and exploit a faculty possessed by a railroad train, but not by a truck. Well, the speed of the truck averaged no more than twenty-five miles an hour. So did that of the ordi-

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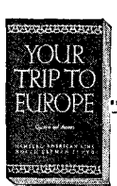

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nary freight train. But though the truck could not enlarge its average greatly if for no other reason than the severe limitation of its top speed, a freight train could be dispatched at the pace of the swiftest expresses. Indeed, faster, since it had to make fewer stops. Moreover, it happens that a lot of trading centers are from three to five hundred miles apart: Chicago from the Twin Cities, Kansas City, Omaha, Memphis; New York from Portland, Buffalo, and Pittsburgh; Philadelphia from Pittsburgh and Boston; San Francisco from Los Angeles; St. Louis from the whole Southwest. If a railroad-owned truck could pick up a man's small shipments at the close of a business day and another one could deliver them four or five hundred miles away the next morning, the railroad had something to sell, and stood a fine chance to get the business, even at a higher rate.

This demanded a complete about-face in the philosophy of railroading, whose categorical imperative is to move as many cars as possible in each train. The faster an engine goes, the less she can haul; if she can handle 3000 tons at an average of thirty miles an hour, she has to be a whiz to wheel a thousand tons at an average of fifty. So the l.c.l. trains had to be dispatched in the same category as passenger flyers—with this difference: a thousand-ton passenger train (thirteen standard Pullmans) is setting the world on fire when it grosses $3.50 or $4 a mile, but a thousand-ton l.c.l. train can gross $10 or $15 a mile.

These fast freights have bolstered up the railroads *esprit de corps* like the news of a great victory. They are marking the turn of the tide, even if it has not begun to ebb appreciably as yet. The story is told how the Illinois Central's *Merchandiser* unwittingly helped along its own competitor: at five, one afternoon, a Chicago tire dealer got a phone call from his friend, a Memphis tire dealer who wanted a certain outsize shoe the next morning. The Chicago dealer simply sent his boy down to the Illinois Central freight office with the tire; next morning at ten it was on a truck 550 miles south of Chicago, joyously rolling down the highway to New Orleans with 10,000 pounds of l.c.l. freight which Illinois Central solicitors hadn't been able to get. Ten years ago a railroad man would have shrugged humorlessly and disconsolately at the incident. Today he smiles confidently. After all, he figures, a freight train is essentially cheaper than the average truck, and sooner or later its inherent superiority will assert itself. Next year, or the one after that, those 10,000 pounds will be moving in a boxcar.

Bone Joe and the Smokin' Woman

(continued from page 24)

scattered, broken run, escaping with a great banging of the empty bone rack, leaving a whirl of fine, boom-town dust to settle slowly behind him.

"Must be pretty hard up for customers," a couple of old cowpunchers riding along the road shouted to each other over the racket, as they watched the bone picker go.

When Hortense and Vangie got out on the clean, golden prairie of evening, they slowed their horses, hooked their knees around the saddle horns, and ate bananas as they considered Bone Joe's consternation at the woman's approach. It gave them an idea for the joke they planned last February, when the fancy lace valentine came for Hortense. The next morning they hunted up one of the matrimonial papers the hay waddies and ranch hands had around the bunkhouse. Between them they made up the five dollars required for the publication of a man's letter, with photograph. After reading the papers through, they described Joe Leems as the owner of "a fine cattle ranch, a large, comfortable home, well-furnished, overlooking a beautiful lake," and gave his name in care of Rutherford Bills. With a picture of Nickie's lean and beautiful face, his thick, pale hair mussed a little, to draw them, the letters began to pile in, as the mail carrier complained to the girls. "Why's your dad let that bone picker fill his box up?"

There were packages, too, odd shapes and sizes. Debating for an hour or two the ethics of the situation in the stilted manner of their most unpopular teacher, they decided upon opening everything not strictly sealed, since, in a way, the mail was more theirs than Bone Joe's. Perhaps the purple fronds of feather sticking from a broken envelope, the crumbs of fudge leaking from a bundle really decided them. The feather was fastened to a lady's garter, a rich purple, and big enough, at least the girls decided, to go around Bone Joe's syrup bucket. There were hand-knitted socks, sleeve-holders, several ties, and in one the wedding picture of a widow, with "sod" written under the mustached man beside her.

Among the practically unsealed letters were some pretty good ones. "My beautiful curly-headed baby boy," one began, in good penmanship. Some were painstakingly done, in unaccustomed ink, with "Dear Sir" and "Yrs resp." Some of the women were kittenish and coy, pretending to have money and many admirers but romantic enough to prefer a great, strong man from the West. One came by special delivery. "Please wire Two Hundred Dollars for Fair and expenses immediately." Enclosed was the picture of a high-bosomed woman with ear bobs and a commanding eye. Hortense, who had taken a minor in history, suggested that she would have made a fine general for the Prussian Army.

When the girls got tired of the mail, they rode over to the dugout in Leems' valley and emptied the grain sack full at Bone Joe's feet, the packages rolling, the cream and lavender envelopes scattering like corn leaves in the wind. The man looked at the lot and up at Hortense in confusion. There he stopped, boldly, for he saw that now the girl's dark eyes were the troubled green black of hail clouds and not gay any more, as her mouth would make them out to be.

It was as well that the girls had their fun before, because Bone Joe didn't do anything, no stammering, no turning red, no sweating, no asking what it was about. Today he just stood there bold as a ferret, his little eyes unblinking as glass on Hortense until she hurried Vangie away to their horses. Nor was there any laughter as they rode out of the valley. Not even the daily letter from Nickie could make Hortense forget the waiting look of Bone Joe's eyes.

The next time Joe Leems shipped a car of bones and scrap iron he thumbed late through the catalogues by the light of the old lantern and finally sent for a red-satin box with sea shells all around the edges. "A gift fit for a queen," the description said, and filled with two pounds of assorted bonbons, finest quality, nineteen cents a pound, extra.

The day Joe brought the box over, Vangie and Hortense were on the top plank of the corral wall, watching the

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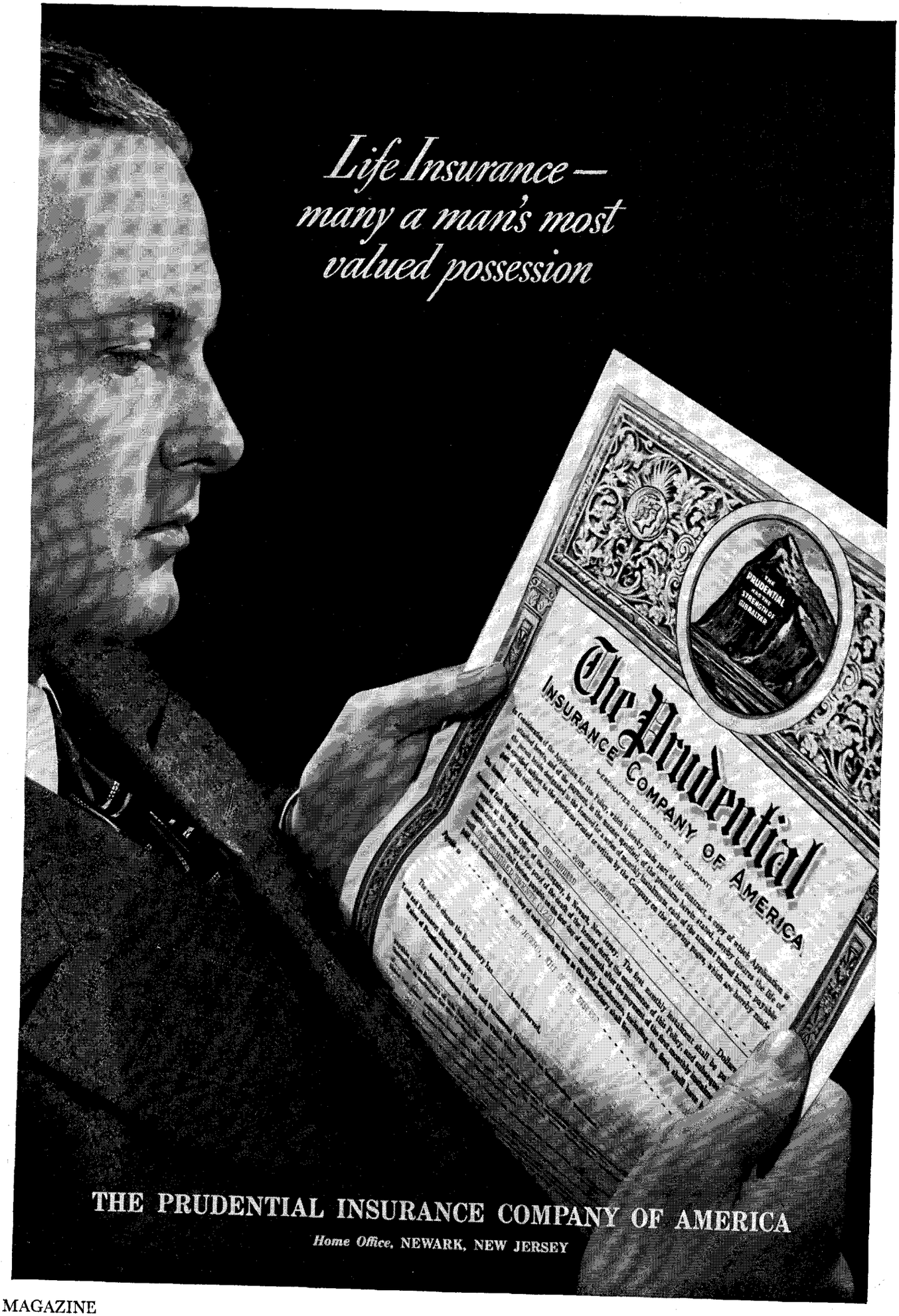

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choreman provide a new mother for an orphaned white-faced calf. Hortense saw the bone wagon turn in at the yard gate, but because it was too late to get away, she waited as the man crawled down and came toward the corral, stiff in his wrinkled drill suit that was still too large, even after two hard sandhill showers on it. With his cap under his arm, he handed Hortense a package in crumpled brown paper and waited for her to open it, his short upper lip twitching in anticipation.

Once the girl started to make the bone picker take the package back, but she remembered what Hippy had told her. "He's got both Cap and the bank where the hair's short." So she unwrapped the box, and Vangie's little squeal of delight seemed to compensate for her own silence. As she opened the lid, the choreboy came up to look over the outfit, as he called it. With much skepticism, he bit into a bonbon, nodded, and spit the candy out. "Old as them bones you pick," he grumbled.

VI

MONDAY, Vangie was going back to school and Hortense with her, into war work. The Saturday before there was a box social and dance at Ned Salzer's, proceeds to go to the Red Cross. Rutherford Bills was away, but Hippy chaperoned the girls, as they called it, chaperoned his own good grub, he insisted, as he sat stiffly on the outside in the roadster, his game leg cramped, holding the girls' twin box in a bleached sugar sack on his good knee. Every mile or so he pretended to steal a look inside the sack by the dim light of the dash, with Vangie grabbing at the box in mock horror that he really might see it.

"I bet you let them Piller boys get a eyeful," he protested.

Vangie shook her pale head of curls at him, but Hortense held the wheel and kept her face to the crooked trail.

"The boys are leaving for overseas tomorrow," she finally said.

At Salzer's they climbed the ladder into the long hayloft smelling clean of alfalfa, saddle leather, and kerosene from the row of lanterns hung along the gable. They were greeted noisily by the early comers, the fiddlers beginning to tune up, and the hay waddies shouting, "Let 'er go!"

With the organ unfolded, the musicians swung into *Tipperary,* and the two Piller boys, tall and strange in uniform, came over. Easily they moved out upon the candle-waxed floor with the girls from the Bills ranch in ruffled voile dresses, Hortense in Alice blue, Vangie in pink; smoothly they dropped into Eastern steps the boys had picked up in college last spring. Struttin' city stuff, the home boys called it; showing off with glides, hesitations, dips, and whirling turns on the ball of the foot.

Toward midnight, the floor manager got out the broom and, pounding the bald-headed end on the floor for attention, announced the sale of the supper boxes. "One hundred per cent goes for the Red Cross an' the Yanks goin' overseas, so bid 'em up, boys, bid 'em up—"

The girls and women settled along the benches, the men gathering at the far end of the loft, for there were to be no nudgings, no signs now. And when the first box was fetched out from behind the curtain across the corner, Bone Joe came pushing forward, using his sharp elbows against the pack of men, until he was clear out in front where he could watch the faces of the girls from Bills and his signals to the auctioneer could be seen plain, for he had planned this evening a long, long time.

One box after another was held high, cried while the owner tried to look unconcerned, and sold for two, three, even eight or nine dollars.

When a red-satin box with sea shells on the edges came up, Vangie nudged Hortense and then they both pretended to look around for the blushing owner. Paying no further attention to the girls, Bone Joe began to bid. One after another the younger fellows got in against him, the older men yelling advice to their contemporary. The box went to twenty dollars. Joe hesitated, but when one of the Piller boys bid an extra quarter, he began again, slowly, thinking each bid out carefully, hanging on like a badger to a hound's throat, not saying a word, just holding up a finger or nodding woodenly for the extra quarter.

At fifty dollars he stopped again, and the other Piller boy bid a dollar raise. Once more the bone picker started, went to sixty-three dollars, with Hortense shaking her head hard at the boys. Everybody else dropped out, and in a great rumpus of stomping and yells and calls, Bone Joe went forward to receive the box on his two open palms. Holding it like a jewel case, he slipped away to the wall through the path that opened for him. All through the rest of the bidding he stood there, straight and secure, not bothering to open the box, even to lift the lid a bit for the name inside.

When the children's boxes were gone,

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and $310.75 had been taken in, the crowd scattered over the loft, men with boxes finding their partners, the stags lining up to buy sandwiches and coffee, usually free at barn dances but sold by the Red Cross tonight. When everybody was settled to eat, Bone Joe once more pushed forward, this time to Hortense and Vangie sitting on a car cushion on the floor, the Piller boys before them on a dust robe, the box with the cattails between them.

"I—I guess maybe I got your box," he said to Hortense, his teeth bucking out through his little grinning mouth. He repeated the words doggedly, despite the roar of laughing that went up from the bar-wide circle watching as the girl shook her short hair.

"Isn't there a name inside?" she asked as kindly as she could, sorry that he made her do this so publicly. The bone picker looked all around him, swiftly, as a coyote ringed in by hounds, and saw what the girl meant in their faces. Once more he plowed through the crowd, this time clear to the ladder and out to his wagon to sit on the tongue in the dim moonlight while a bunch of young squirts sneaked after him, humming the bone picker's song from behind shadowy cars and wagons until those fathers who owed the lone man money came out angrily to send the boys flying. And inside the loft sixteen-year-old Alice Mason cried into her handkerchief. She had lost the pretty red box Hortense had given her, and the first social of her whole life was spoiled, even though her box brought the most of any.

VII

SUNDAY evening the girls went to Gaylor to see the Piller boys off, kissing them and wishing them great good luck with a gaiety that did not cover foreboding. By the next summer both the boys were gone, one in action, the other of gangrene; and Bone Joe had a breach-of-promise suit on his hands, one of the mail-order widows, the one Hortense said would make a good Prussian general. But she hadn't a scrap of paper to prove anything, and no jury would ever believe that she pinned Joe down to a definite promise, even though the widow was a determined woman. She walked clear out to the dugout and might have walked back for all of Joe Leems if the mail carrier hadn't felt sorry for her—thick feet stuffed into high-heeled pumps, a suitcase and something over two hundred pounds of meat to lug. Nothing came of the case because a fellow up at Gaylor who owed

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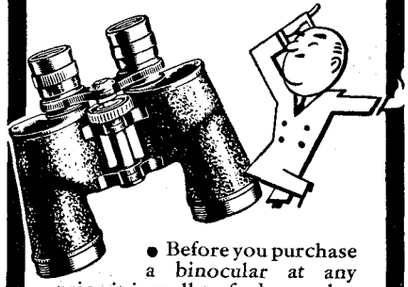

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VIII

For the first time in ten years Hortense didn't come home that summer. Hippy's rare notes were full of meatless, wheatless days and bread made with black flour and potatoes, not fit for a hound dog's belly. Cap Bills, thinking of Bone Joe in a new suit, with a big car and big ways, didn't urge the girl.

The rancher had put the last cent he could raise into potash, the new wartime industry. Neglecting the interest and the taxes, he even considered mortgaging Bills Pocket, the quarter left to Hortense by her mother. But he couldn't ask the girl, and so that remained free. Everything else went into potash. Fortunes were made down at Sully. Bone Joe had sold the fifty acres of his dirty lake for ten thousand dollars, cash, it was rumored. And his interest in the potash works for a hundred thousand. That was just like a bone picker, selling out for small potatoes, some said. Another year or two, and he'd a been a millionaire. Got scared at the talk of one side or the other in the War caving in. Germany could keep going, Cap Bills thought, now that Russia was out. Another year—that was all he needed.

Then, suddenly, the hysteria of the Armistice was upon them. Hortense's work was over and so she came home for a while. Cap met her at Gaylor, much older, but full of ideas. He was working hard for a tariff on German potash, hoping for an extension on his long overdue mortgages. Hortense tried to talk to him of these things, but he drew himself up tall as ever. "It has never been necessary for a Bills woman to worry her pretty head—" So the daughter kissed his softening cheek and saddled up her pinto for a hard ride in the hills.

IX

The next day Joe Leems came to the Bills yard, not in his bone wagon this time, but in a new yellow roadster, a long, low one he took in on a foreclosure from a potash man. He wore a new wide-striped suit—like one he saw on an actor in Sully the winter before—yellow, bumper-toe shoes and a cap. He stopped his new car alongside the house that hadn't seen paint for twelve years and went in his bright shoes straight up on the ranch-house porch. Without knocking, he pulled the door open and walked boldly into the Bills living room.

At his step Hortense was up from the piano, to stand alone, straight and tall, against this intruder. Joe Leems tried to hold his ground, say he had a right there, but before the daughter of Rutherford Bills he was once more only a dirty bone picker.

That night Rutherford Bills sat late before the fire in the old ranch house. Young Hortense didn't seem to have much luck with her men, he mused: her father a gut-shot old critter just hanging onto his place by his toenails, hoping; that Piller boy of hers buried in France; and then she went and fell in love with a poetry fellow. And all the time there was old Bone Joe Leems, waiting around like a bare-necked buzzard on a fence.

He had always hoped to spare the girl but now at last he saw he must tell her something of his difficulties. Of course, the market would go up as soon as a tariff was put on potash. It had to come. America protected her industries. Until then he would be busy as a sheepherder in lambing time, couldn't be beauing his handsome daughter around as was proper. Now he hoped she would go to her aunt for a spell. Later, maybe, they'd take a long trip together.

And so, as though there was nothing but the thought of a holiday for the girl between them, no long knowledge of the ranch failure, no Bone Joe walking unasked into the old living room, Hortense packed. In the morning, Hippy sat over a cup of coffee in the cookhouse with the girl and then hobbled to the door to watch her go. Yeh, he'd see to Cap, see to him as well as any man alive.

X

It wasn't until the second summer that Bone Joe realized that Hortense Bills wasn't coming back, even with Cap down sick. A straw boss was running the place, with Hippy living in the ranch house and the doctor coming out every week. Kidney trouble, some said. They could tell. Old Cap'd been walking stooped below the middle for months and looking the color of under-done biscuits. That cigarette-smoking girl of his belonged to home. Somebody had ought to tell her what was what. Then it got around that Bone Joe had a man look her up in New York, found her married, or that she'd better be. The next week he took over the Bills ranch.

The day Joe Leems came out, Hippy padded the back seat of the old touring car with quilts and bedding, helped Cap in and let him hold the portrait of Diane. The front seat and the running board he loaded with stovepipe and pots and pans. Behind them came one of Ned Salzer's trucks with an old stove, a few books, and the piano that hadn't been opened for two years.

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By evening they were settled in Bills Pocket, with the first smoke coming from the old shack that was thrown together over twenty years ago and was now mighty leaky and airish. Cap Bills wouldn't let Hippy take out his pencil to write to the daughter. But some of the women folks saw to it that she knew, and so Hortense Bills came home. She must have brought a little money, because Hippy drove in to Gaylor, hired carpenters, and had lumber hauled out for an ell of two rooms. Saturday night, the loafers were waiting thick along the street as the carpenters drew up in the center parking. Yeh, Tensy Bills was a-comin' due, all right. They'd seen her man, too, one of them there pale potato sprouts, with hair light as a meadow full of tickle grass a-blowing, and wax-beany fingers.

The night the baby came, Cap Bills' tired old heart stopped. "The Lord giveth and the Lord taketh away," the preacher said at the funeral. Everyone in the county able to be out seemed to be there, those who had worked for Cap standing in a knot off to the side, remembering the man he was.

At the grave the old ranch cook and Nickie stood alone, the light wind lifting the thin gray hair of Hippy's bowed head, ruffling the heavy blond waves above the boyish face of the young husband. At the end, Joe Leems came edging up to stand beside them, his head sticking forward on his neck, his hat held against his stomach. As the old cook guided the sobbing Nickie away, he thought of those days when Hortense rode free over the hills. Even then the bone picker's little eyes were after her, even before he had any paper against her father, long before he started wearing a tie to the ranch, a buzzard trying to fly as high as an eagle.

Now Rutherford Bills was gone, and his fine, wide ranch was in the hands of Bone Joe, Mr. Joseph P. Leems. By the time the potash companies were all broke, he had taken over a county-seat bank, and foreclosed the paper until he owned half a dozen of the smaller ranches that just couldn't seem to compete with South American beef. He got most of the town of Gaylor, too, including the buildings housing the post office, the city headquarters, and the fire department.

The backs of the menus at Leems Café listed the Leems hotel, pool hall, barber shop, filling station, garage, grocery and drygoods, hardware and undertaking, livery and feed, lumber and coal, insurance, loans and investments.

Although he held himself fairly straight when he remembered, inside he was still Bone Joe, even in his dark-green, belted-back suit, with a pink silk shirt, gray cowman's hat, and a bulge in the back of his pants that was said to be twenty dollar bills, although nobody ever saw him break one.

He had a room at the hotel, offices at the bank and the city hall, and a sort of a hole in the wall with outside stairs above the feed store. Inside was an old leather davenport, a rusty two-hole stove, much like that of his old dugout, and several pictures of Theda Bara on the wall.

Women were giving him the eye now. Now and then a girl even slipped up the outside stairs to the room over the feed store, though it was generally some frightened little thing, sent because interest was due on a mortgage.

Around the livery stable there was a lot of laughing. By golly, it sure looked like old Bone Joe couldn't stand comparison, keepin' to them scared kids like he did. The story ran from the pitch players to the five-hundred club and the bridge-whist circle, growing as it went. Some thought it a mean shame, such young girls, but they weren't in a position to do much complaining, just now, owing the man money themselves. The weekly paper at the county seat, where Bone Joe was horning in, gave half a column to the story, mostly just hinting, calling it "The Shame of Our Sister City." By Thursday evening the paper was sold out. Those on the Friday mail deliveries got nothing, and the next week there was an apology, boxed in black, like an obituary, headed "UPRIGHT CITIZEN MALIGNED BY IDLE GOSSIP."

After that, Joe Leems had no more frightened night visitors in his room. Instead, he took to driving out alone in the evenings. He was walking cockier, too, as though the far pastures were pretty good. Then one night young Singer came tearing up the rickety stairs, kicked the door in, and with his fingers on Bone's scrawny throat, told him he'd cut his dirty heart out and throw it in his face if he didn't let Ellie Melkorn alone.

The next Sunday evening two cars full of white-robed figures stopped at the Melkorn place, dragged young Singer out of the kitchen where he was helping Ellie with the supper dishes, and later dumped him on his father's porch, the skin stripped from his back with a bull whip.

Hortense heard little about the excitement that swept Gaylor and the county seat. She did know that times were hard, farm (*continued on page* 56)

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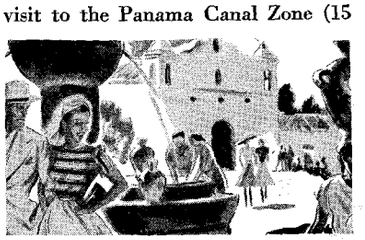

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VEERING perilously from paths which lead to the purest music of the 16th, 17th, and 18th centuries (volume six of the incomparable *L'Anthologie Sonore* having been the most recent Gramophone Shop exploration), the resourceful Messrs. Brogan and Tyler pluck another phonographic precedent from beneath the noses of the larger recording companies. This time their excursion yields a collection of four discs, each side of which brims with the most uproarious and penetrating musical humor you are apt to encounter anywhere today (Gramophone Shop "Varieties" set). And that, of course, would mean the presence of the inimitable Alec Templeton, whose uncanny ear, adroit fingers, and piercing sense of the ridiculous provide an unexpected compensation for the depressing allurements of Radio City's exaggerated Rainbow Room.

Mr. Templeton's amazing gifts have been exploited too infrequently in less exclusive quarters. If you have heard this English musician on broadcast programs such as those of the RCA "Magic Key" Hour or Bing Crosby's Kraft Music Hall you will need no further inducement to make a permanent acquaintance with his side-splitting satires. If, on the other hand, Mr. Templeton, his piano, and his astonishing vocal equipment have escaped your ears, by all means treat them to *Impressions of Old-fashioned Italian Opera,* wherein the vagaries (not so quaint) of the traditional prima donna and leading tenor (the latter featured in the great tenor aria, *Jella Jello*) are exposed with devastating mockery.

A Trip Through a Music Conservatory, a tone picture inspired by the parodist's student days at the Royal College of Music, London, and perhaps his most remarkable stunt, comes next. Here, with only one voice and ten fingers, Mr. Templeton reproduces the cacophony in corridors, the clash of a vocalizing tenor and an equally determined soprano, and brief visits to the chamber-music room and concert hall, with sly sidelights on thematic analysis and frequent rhythmic and tonal aberrations.

Practically no phase of the invisible art escapes this musician who has been blind since birth. His *Shortest Wagnerian Opera,* or "Through the *Ring, Tristan,* and *Tannhäuser* in Three Minutes," is a penetrating caricature of leitmotifs, heldentenors, and heaving lovers which will delight the anti-Wagnerians no end, yet I suspect so ardent and incorrigible an enthusiast as Lawrence Gilman would find it completely irresistible. *Impressions of Two German Lieder Singers* is a honey. The "interpretative" art and familiar vocal mannerisms of Frau and Herr Herrmann Schöner will put you in stitches the fiftieth hearing no less than the first.

Alec Templeton can ridicule the music of his own country as deliciously as that of another, and in *The Lost Chord,* "first as it was written by Sir Arthur Sullivan and then as it might have been written for one of the Gilbert and Sullivan operas," and in *An Amateur Performance of Gilbert and Sullivan,* he has confected his most hilarious parodies.

The last record in this unusual set confirms Mr. Templeton's reputation as a pianist and composer of genuine distinction. On the first side that historic harbinger of the jitterbug craze, *The Music Goes 'Round and Around,* is treated as a subject for a Mozart piano sonata, as Johann Strauss would have woven it into the texture of a Viennese waltz, and, most amazing of all, as George Frederick Handel might have posed it as an aria in a grand oratorio.

The finale demonstrates Mr. Templeton's mastery of an art practically neglected today. In an *Improvisation on Five Varied Melodies* he juxtaposes *A Tisket, A Tasket,* Mendelssohn's *Wedding March, The Lambeth Walk, M'Appari* from *Martha,* and Wagner's *Ride of the Valkyries* with surprising contrapuntal results.

*

Among the new records listed below as outstanding publications of recent months, attention is called to the splendid recordings of ballet music, particularly to the Victor sets, inasmuch as these were released in a special broadside and

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did not appear in the regular monthly announcements.

Orchestra

RICHARD STRAUSS: *Symphonia Domestica.* Philadelphia Orchestra con. Eugene Ormandy. Victor set No. M520.

WEBER: *The Hebrides—Overture.* London Philharmonic Orchestra con. Sir Thomas Beecham. Columbia No. 69400.

SMETANA: *The Moldau; From Bohemia's Meadows and Forests.* Czech Philharmonic Orchestra con. Rafael Kubelik. Victor set No. M523.

ROSSINI: *La Scala di Seti—Overture.* B. B. C. Orchestra con. Arturo Toscanini. Victor No. 15191.

TSCHAIKOWSKY: *The Swan-Lake—Excerpts* (Ballet). London Philharmonic Orchestra con. Antal Dorati. Columbia set No. 349.

CHABRIER: *Cotillon—Ballet.* London Philharmonic Orchestra con. Antal Dorati. Columbia set No. X113.

OFFENBACH: *Gaité Parisienne—Ballet.* London Philharmonic Orchestra con. Efrem Kurtz. Columbia set No. X115.

SCARLATTI-TOMMASINI: *The Good-Humored Ladies—Ballet.* London Philharmonic Orchestra con. Eugene Goossens. Victor set No. M512.

BIZET: *Jeux d'Enfants—Ballet.* London Philharmonic Orchestra con. Antal Dorati. Victor set No. M510.

SCHUMANN: *Carnaval—Ballet.* London Philharmonic Orchestra con. Eugene Goossens. Victor set No. M513.

Vocal

WEBER: *Oberon—Ozean, du Ungeheuer.* Kirsten Flagstad, soprano; Philadelphia Orchestra con. Eugene Ormandy. Victor No. 15244.

Concerto

SCHUMANN: *Concerto in A minor, op. 54.* Myra Hess, piano; orchestra con. Walter Goehr. Victor set No. M473.

Chamber Music

HINDEMITH: *Quartet No. 3, op. 22.* Coolidge String Quartet. Victor set No. M524.

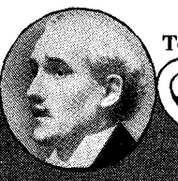
—RICHARD GILBERT

Clare Boothe

(continued from page 13)

caricature of Heywood Broun. Broun wrote an outraged column when *The Women* was produced, accusing the author not only of dull vulgarity but of attempting to "degrade the human race." "It reminds me," said Broun, "of nothing so much as an old stag story told after dinner by a lady who never quite got the point." Miss Boothe, who never forgives her enemies, had the last word when she permitted Cindy Lou, the unreconstructed Rebel of her new success, to butt the radical columnist squarely in the belly. The curious thing is, nevertheless, that in the end the columnist comes off rather handsomely. Certainly his denunciation of the incipi-

Barbirolli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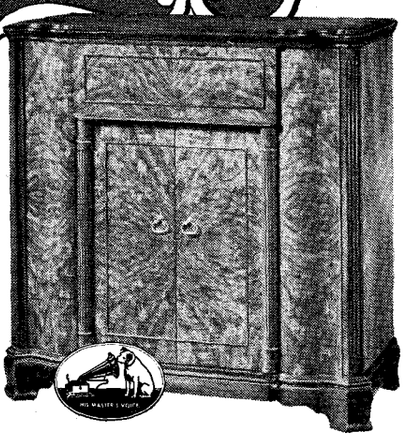

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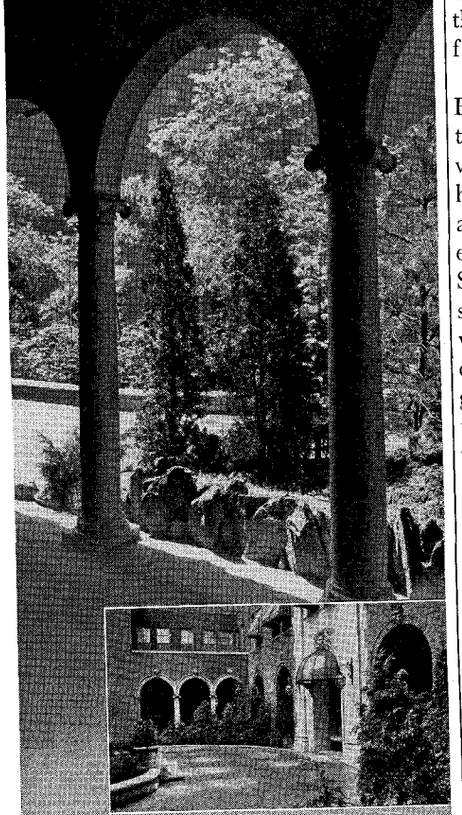

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ent Fascism of the South is the finest speech in the play.

Recently the notion has developed that Miss Boothe is consciously or unconsciously a Left Wing playwright. She has read about that too and is not averse to finding social significance in her own works. Indeed, with what must be adept hindsight, she has now come to the conclusion that *Kiss the Boys Goodbye* is not merely a travesty on the movies but a literary casket in which there is cleverly concealed the warning that when Fascism comes, it will come from the South.

The socially minded may hear in the Boothe plays the distant thunder of tumbrels, but I don't think the playwright hears them. It is more realistic to hazard the opinion that her personal animosities, and not economic prescience, set the pitch note for her diatribes. She has a tidy wit, but her perspective seems confused and undirected. Her wisecracks seem to indicate that she has contempt and hatred for not merely the group she professes to satirize but for the whole human race. No character who does not have a case of moral measles or a certification of spiritual bankruptcy need apply for work in the theaters where she holds forth. Her women are sluts, backbiters, or dumbbells. Her men are androgynes, lechers, or sots.

IV

Clare Boothe and Henry R. Luce were married in 1935, just two days after the inauspicious opening of her first Broadway play. Five years earlier, *Vanity Fair* published a photograph of Luce in the department headed "We Nominate for the Hall of Fame." The caption under it was written by Miss Boothe and read as follows:

"Because he originated the newsmagazine idea; because at the age of 32 he is the successful editor and publisher of *Time* and *Fortune* magazines; because he was born in China; because he was once a humble newspaper reporter on the Chicago *Daily News;* and lastly because he claims that he has no other interests outside of his work and that his work fills his working hours."

Miss Boothe had not met Henry Luce. In 1933 they were introduced at a party, argued fiercely over magazine editing, and parted irritably. Two years later they met again at an Elsa Maxwell soiree. A possibly apocryphal version of this encounter has it that the blunt-spoken Luce came across the room, sat down beside Miss Boothe, and said: "You are the woman I am going to marry." The lady agreed to let him call

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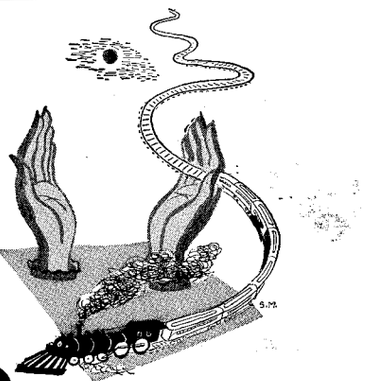

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WILL OUR ROOMS be comfortable, colorful, airy . . . the kind we'd like to see at the end of a tiring day? Have they a private bath? . . *YES INDEED!*

WILL OUR SURROUNDINGS be attractive so that we can take pride in entertaining our friends? . *INDEED YES!*

WILL WE HAVE A CHOICE of restaurants, so we can eat well but simply when we're short, and on the grand scale when we're flush? . . . *YES INDEED!*

HOW ABOUT CONVENIENCE? Are transportation facilities right at our door? Can we walk to theatres, museums, smart shops? . . . . *INDEED YES!*

PHYSICAL WELL-BEING is important to us. Do you have a gym and a swimming pool? A roof garden where we can get sun and exercise? . . *YES INDEED!*

WE WANT RELAXATION too . . . have you a library, a place where we can practice our music? Will we meet new and interesting people? . . . *INDEED YES!*

AND IS ALL THIS WITHIN OUR BUDGET? . . . *YES INDEED!*

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next afternoon. A few months afterward they were married.

Miss Boothe writes in longhand and has been known to turn out a rough draft of a play in three days. Most of her work is done at the 7000-acre plantation at Moncks Corner, which is some forty miles from Charleston. She outraged the local gentry when she introduced modern architecture into the land of the azalea and the engaged pilaster, but once again she had the last word. Edward D. Stone's design for the guest houses won the medal for domestic architecture at the 1937 exhibition of the New York Architectural League.

Clare Boothe has many virtues. She is a patient and painstaking workman. Those who have been associated with her in the theater say that she is amenable to criticism and has never, even in the nerve-shattering times of rehearsal, shown the slightest demonstration of temperament. She is always ready to revise a scene, tailor an ineffective situation, and to turn out new lines endlessly. In her own person she is calm, contained, energetic, financially generous, and a charming hostess.

The fact remains that the metropolitan scene is dotted with people who dislike her intensely. This attitude, so far as an investigator can determine, has no rational explanation. Envy undoubtedly has something to do with it—Cinderella's shoe seems to have been an exact fit for the little girl who met Mrs. Belmont—but it must be something more than envy since people equally successful find her difficult to love. When she wired her congratulations to Robert Sherwood on the opening night of *Abe Lincoln in Illinois*, Dorothy Parker asked: "And just how did she sign her message—Clare Wilkes Booth?"

As a person and as a writer Miss Boothe seems to be a triumph of planned economy. She is a military genius in skirts, outlining her strategies before the occasion for strategy arises, taking nothing for granted, gambling all on her intelligence. This is evident in her plays; her wit is at its best in the exchange and examination of ideas. Emotional content is lacking, possibly because Miss Boothe not only eschews the luxury of emotion but denies its validity. Many people feel in her a curious reserve that they resent and do not understand. Even her closest associates have never seen her with her defenses down, or completely unself-conscious. It is as though she had fought her way to success in the face of a concerted opposition and, with success achieved, could not unlearn the lesson of trusting no one but herself.

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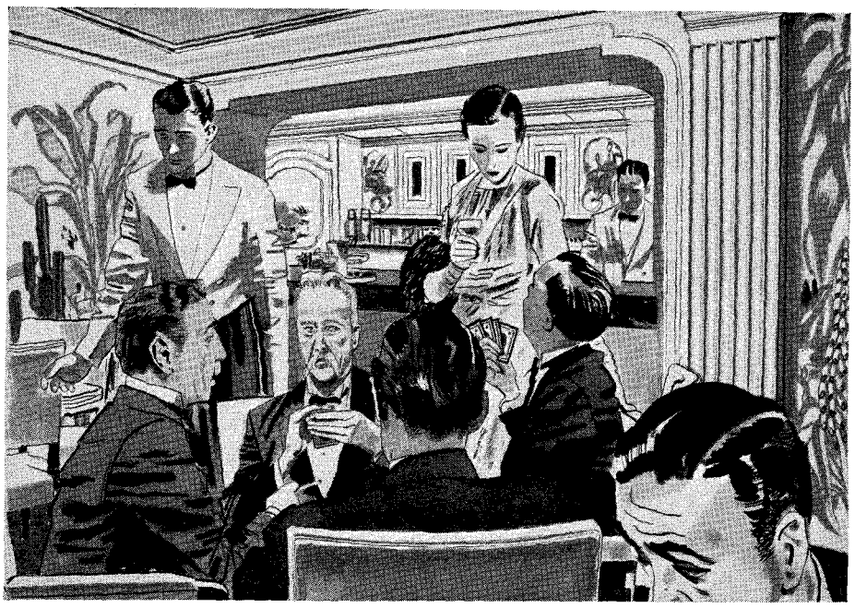

DRAWING BY ROBERT FAWCETT

Bar corner of the Club on the "Santa Rosa"

Wines, Spirits, and Good Living

Five ways of preparing the Milk Punch . . . American cured ham baked in domestic red wine . . . the quality of post-repeal beer

THERE'S both food and drink in a milk punch, and it is as good hot as it is cold, hence that famous yet often misunderstood concoction belongs possibly more than any other in this department. Furthermore, there seems to be considerable doubt as to what goes into the drink, to judge by recent letters from SCRIBNER'S readers. There can be no question that the American idea of the drink is the best of all. Many of the mixtures appearing in recent recipe books and copied from foreign publications should be avoided, for milk and alcohol do not always mix well.

The season for hot milk punches will soon be at an end, hence one recipe of that type is sufficient:

Boil together a quart of milk, four ounces of sugar, a small stick of cinnamon, and the peel of one lemon. Then beat together the yolks of three eggs and the white of one; add the boiling compound gradually and keep stirring the mixture while you pour into it a wineglassful of rum. Serve hot.

Cold milk punches are, to my way of thinking, far more interesting, not only during the warm-weather months, but all year around. The following recipes present a further advantage, inasmuch as some of them may be prepared several days and even weeks before they are to be served.

Recipe I. (For immediate consumption) All cold milk punches, whether made with brandy, rum, or whiskey, are prepared alike, by mixing a glass of milk with one gill of the liquor selected, adding a spoonful of sugar, and shaking well, with as much ice as the shaker will hold.

Recipe II. Warm two quarts of water and one of new milk, then mix them well together and sweeten with loaf sugar. Rub a few lumps of sugar on a lemon peel, put them into a jug with the above and half a pint of lemon juice, stirring the mixture well as it is poured in. Then add one quart of old brandy. Strain and bottle off, and in cold weather it will keep a fortnight.

Recipe III. Dissolve two and one-half pounds of sugar in one gallon of cold spring water; add thereto a quarter of a pint of orange-flower water, with the juice of twenty limes and eight oranges. Stir well together; pour in one quart of boiling milk and add three bottles of old brandy and a like quantity of orange-brandy shrub. Strain and serve, or bottle off.

Recipe IV. This calls for the following ingredients: Three bottles of rum, one of sherry, three pounds of lump sugar, the rinds of six lemons and the juice of twelve, and one full quart of boiling milk. Mix and let it stand for three

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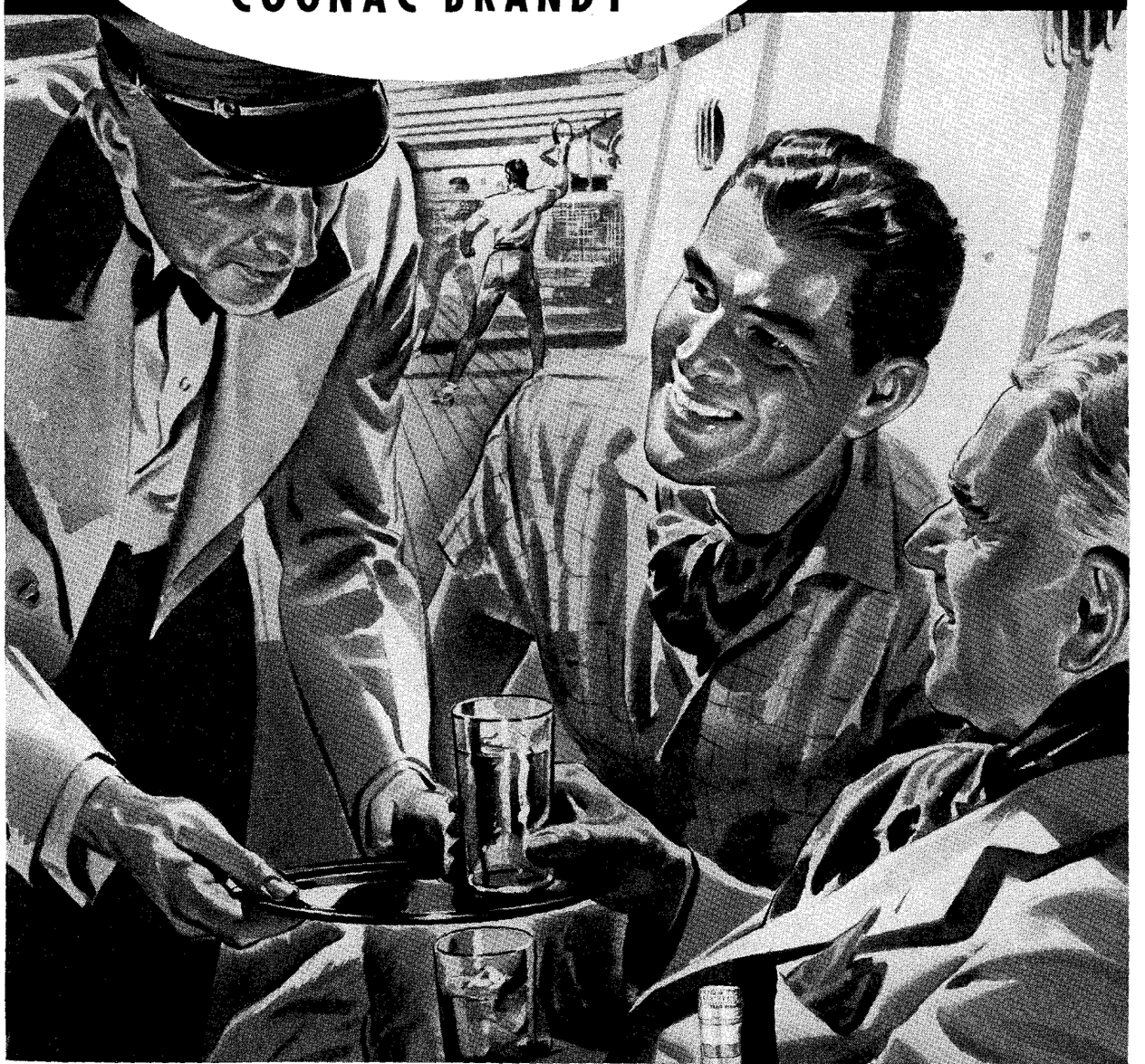

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months. Then rebottle and lay the bottles on their sides in the cellar.

Having tasted American cured ham in almost every form, a New York reader wants to know how he can cook it in domestic wine from his own home state. The following is one of my favorite recipes, and the wine to be used may be any claret type from the vineyards of New York in the Finger Lakes district:

Select a small ham, not too lean and not too fat, and soak it overnight. Clean and place in a large kettle of cold water, and bring to a boil quickly. Allow to simmer for about three hours until nearly tender. Then remove the skin carefully and place in a roasting pan.

Make a broth of one and one-half quarts of strong stock and one bottle of red wine, one tablespoonful of sugar, three cloves, and a few small onions. Bring this broth to a boil and strain over the ham in the roasting pan.

Bake in moderately hot oven, basting often for about one-half to three-quarters of an hour until brown and shiny. Remove ham to a hot platter.

Strain the sauce remaining in the pan, add a few drops of lemon juice and a glass of Madeira. Allow to heat thoroughly and serve in gravy boat.

If desired, a very little brown flour may be added, but it is preferable not to thicken further this delicious sauce.

Ask Mr. Fougner

QUESTION: What is the difference between a Tom Collins and a Gin Fizz?

ANSWER: The two drinks are made in the same way with the same ingredients:—juice of one lemon, two spoonfuls of powdered sugar, one jigger of gin, and soda. The sole difference is that for the Tom Collins a larger glass is used.

QUESTION: How do you explain the fact that no one can drink as many glasses of present-day lager beer as of the pre-Volstead variety? Is it true that the beer is not as good as it used to be and that its alcoholic content is lower?

ANSWER: No, it is not true. If your gustatory capacity has not been corrupted by your interim prohibition experience, you will find a number of fine beers that are as deserving of praise as any you found before the dry era.

The brewers of fame and reputation are making the same beers they did before prohibition and in the same way. Good lager beer varies in alcoholic content, from approximately 3.6 to 6 per cent of alcohol by volume, depending entirely upon its type. Alcohol is an incidental constituent of beer, not a measure of excellence.—G. SELMER FOUGNER

Books

Books of battle ... Woodrow Wilson, Vol. VII ... Medieval fantasy and fantastic realism ... report on crime

Military

Despite its fine writing, Liddell Hart's *Through the Fog of War* (Random House, $2.50) is a disappointing rehash, in line of afterthought, of previously published historical commentaries.

Worst of all, and Captain Hart cannot be blamed for this, is the misleading blurb—"Before you decide what diplomatic policy you think the United States should pursue, read *Through the Fog of War.*" If interested in that subject, read, instead, George Fielding Eliot's *The Ramparts We Watch* (Reynal & Hitchcock, $3), a thesis on national defense of these United States by an author who knows his subject. Logical in presentation, sound in analysis, shrewd in conclusions—debatable though they may be in some detail—Major Eliot's book fills a real need. Here we have for once a realistic summary of our military situation in the Western hemisphere, bare of idealistic claptrap, shorn of the half-truth camouflage so frequently surrounding arguments upon this subject.

As keystone of his presentation, Eliot proves the necessity for sea power to the United States with its ocean frontiers. Stressing the importance of Pan-American defense, he brings out the strategic value of the Caribbean area, writes illuminatingly of the Pacific situation. No saber-rattling this, but a dispassionate weighing of factors to be considered in the wide viewpoint of national strategy upon which military policy must be based if sane, balanced national defense is to be attained.

The bibliography is excellent, the index adequate. The three maps give graphic representation of the problems involved. *The Ramparts We Watch* belongs certainly in the hands of every citizen interested in the whys and wherefores of national defense—a subject of vital import these days.

Whosoever has dipped thus far should go one step further and read *The Coming Struggle for Latin America,* by Carleton Beals (Lippincott, $3), a most interesting though somewhat alarming estimate of the situation today south of the Rio Grande. Mr. Beals relates a stirring tale of intrigue and power politics being played, he asserts, by European and Asiatic nations with Latin-American land and resources as stakes, against an Uncle Sam whose real motives he paints in somewhat dubious colors.

Too bad it is that Mr. Beals has adopted a partisan attitude (although for what group is not readily ascertainable), tainting somewhat the flavor of his facts—rich enough in themselves. Nonetheless, such chapters as "The Mikado Looks South," "Swastika Over the Andes," "The Black Shirts March," "The British Lion Retreats," and "Red Star South" answer such of the kin to Didymus as wonder why the United States should maintain a navy strong enough to command the seas.

—MAJOR R. ERNEST DUPUY

Biography

Diversity rather than quantity marks the mid-winter biography. At the head of the list stands the seventh volume of Ray Stannard Baker's *Woodrow Wilson: Life and Letters* (Doubleday, Doran, $5), which covers the exciting period from America's declaration of war to the end of February, 1918, when the greatest of the German offensives was in the making. Mr. Baker's method is that employed in earlier volumes—a republication of all the essential documents with a minimum of comment. As the documents pile up during the War years, the work takes on more and more the nature of a source book; but if detail occasionally swamps interest, the value of the *Life* to the historian increases. Baker in the end will outdo Nicolay and Hay's portrayal of an earlier wartime president. It was from President Lincoln's mistakes that Mr. Wilson learned the necessity of choosing a competent general-in-chief, whom he would require the politicians and the bureaucrats to leave alone. How President Wilson contrived this, and how gradually he learned of the secret treaties that were to plague the conference at Versailles are the most important disclosures in this volume.

The World War from another angle is

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presented in *The Captains and the Kings Depart* (Scribners, $7.50), the collected letters and journals of the second Viscount Esher for 1910–30. The work, which is unobtrusively edited and admirably printed, has been likened to Greville's memoirs, but the resemblance is superficial. Greville was far more inquisitive than Esher and less easily bored. He recorded currents; Esher dealt more with the daily ebb and flow. While there is much of interest and something of permanent historical value in the Viscount's correspondence, it is essentially a mirror of the mind of Edwardians who lived through the World War.

If it is variety of mind one wishes to survey, Sir Herbert Grierson's *Sir Walter Scott, Bart.* (Columbia, $4.50) presents a contrast and a riddle. Why the most Scottish of all novelists should have been the least Scottish of businessmen remains a mystery even when Grierson's scholarly book is closed. With infinite patience, though sometimes in a stiff and crabbed style, Sir Herbert traces all Scott's financial dealings with his publishers and printers, but he has to content himself with the view that a "dualism pervaded Scott's life as well as his work." An immense amount of research is compressed into some 300 pages of text. Sir Herbert demonstrates clearly that Lockhart's biography of Scott needs rewriting. He might not care, at seventy-two, to undertake that task himself, but if he would do for Lockhart's text what Birkbeck Hill did for Boswell's Johnson, he would make every student of Sir Walter Scott his debtor.

A Scotland transplanted to America is the scene of the altogether charming memoirs of Elizabeth Randolph Preston Allan, *A March Past* (Dietz, $2.50). Mrs. Allan spent her girlhood in Lexington, Virginia, stronghold of Southern Calvinism, during the years when the youth of that town recruited Jackson's foot cavalry, and old "Jack" himself wrote often to her father, and, later, when General Lee was president of Washington College. Mrs. James Chesnut, Mrs. Clement Clay, and Mrs. Roger Pryor demonstrated long ago that in the realm of letters the women have been more persuasive than the men in presenting the Confederate cause. Mrs. Allan deserves to be listed with those three.

—Douglas S. Freeman

Fiction

With gay originality and genuine charm T. H. White has told the story of King Arthur's boyhood in *The Sword in the Stone* (Putnam, $2.50). Much of the gaiety comes from the deliberate anachronisms in the story. Morgan the Fay has an Olde Tea Shoppe in her enchanted castle, and Sir Ector is an M. F. H. Merlyn, Arthur's tutor, lives backward in time and keeps remembering things which he realizes nobody else can know about because they have not yet been invented. There is gaiety, too, in the realistic account of King Pellinore hunting, purely out of habit, for the Beast Glatissant, and of his clumsy, conventional duels with Sir Grummore. Mr. White makes fun of the Middle Ages much as Mark Twain did. But Mr. White is an erudite medievalist who appears to know a great deal about the daily life of that remote England, and everything about falconry. As a part of Arthur's education Merlyn turns the boy into a hawk and lets him pass the night with the hawks in the mews, listening to their talk. It is rather like being at an officers' mess. At other times Arthur becomes an owl, a snake, a perch, and his experiences are both imaginative and oddly convincing. Fanciful as the story sounds when reported in brief, it is when read neither absurd nor hard to accept, any more than *Alice in Wonderland* is. In fact, this is that kind of book, and one of the best of its kind since Lewis Carroll.

Fiction is an elastic term. It applies as properly to Kressman Taylor's *Address Unknown* (Simon & Schuster, $1), which is no more than a short story, as to Eric Lowe's *Salute to Life* (Reynal & Hitchcock, $2.50), a full-bodied panoramic novel of modern Australia. Mrs. Taylor's story is an invented document of the present day. Two German-Americans have been business partners in San Francisco, and life-long friends. One of them, an "Aryan," has returned to Munich; the other, a Jew, has remained in California. Their whole history emerges from a series of letters exchanged between them from November, 1932, to March, 1934. Rarely has so much been told in so few words: corruption, vengeance, and a terrible poetic justice. Phyllis Bottome's *Danger Signal* (Little, Brown, $2.50) is a case history dealing with a murder. Only, in this case the action lies chiefly in the mind of a woman who is in the grip of an impulse to murder her former lover. The problem is solved by an enlightened woman psychiatrist, and the solution makes up an interesting though not quite distinguished novel. Alec Waugh's *Going Their Own Ways* (Farrar & Rinehart, $2.50) is in effect a group of case histories of the varied marriages of the members of a single family. Not brilliant, or in the long run perhaps important,

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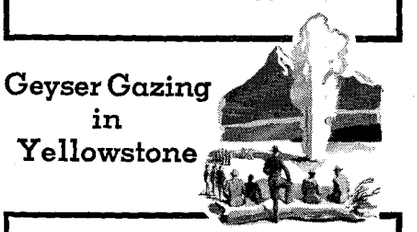

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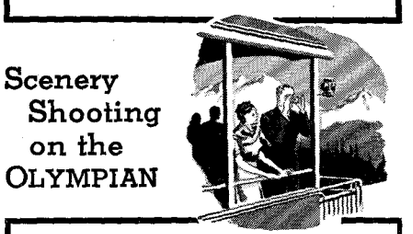

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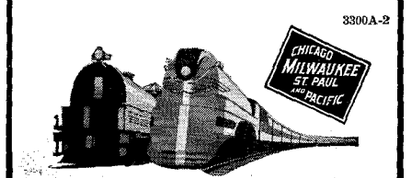

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but for the time being serious, sympathetic, and intelligent.

William Faulkner has created and peopled a world for his novels, and his own unmistakable tone and style. You feel this from the first page of *The Wild Palms* (Random House, $2.50) increasingly to the powerful end. It seems to me that his style is still unfortunate, with its twistings and turnings. Its melodies often enrich the story, but as often slow it up. A few feathers on an arrow serve to balance it and direct its flight. Some of Mr. Faulkner's sentences move like arrows smothered in feathers. Yet as a whole *The Wild Palms* is the straightest story he has told so far in a novel. Strictly speaking, it is two stories. One is of a doctor who runs away from his life into a torrent of illicit and fatal love. The other is of a runaway convict who is caught by a Mississippi flood and so handled by it that he returns to prison as to a joyful haven. The two stories do not touch but run parallel in a sort of moral counterpoint. This love is as irresistible and as implacable as this river. *The Wild Palms* is a double story of human obsession and overwhelming nature, one made as exciting and as frightening as the other. —Carl Van Doren

Mysteries

The literary crime wave of 1939 has got under way with bounce and gusto, and several highly meritorious murders have already been committed.

The Rhadamanthine Doctor Thorndyke is at his magisterial best in *The Stoneware Monkey,* by R. Austin Freeman (Dodd, Mead, $2). Although the book is made up of several narratives by different people, the sum total is satisfactory, and the puzzle is excellent. There is considerable skulduggery afoot in its pages, with the remains of one victim turning up in the shape of a calcined finger bone and some bits of porcelain teeth salvaged from a potter's furnace. The ultimate, and startling, discovery clears up two murders and elucidates the mystery of the hideous simian from which the story takes its name. All details are painstakingly worked out, and though there are few pyrotechnics, the story marches.

Arrogant Alibi, by C. Daly King (Appleton, $2), attempts the most difficult of all mystery-story devices—namely, the disintegration of the multiple alibi. And it succeeds amazingly well. Though Freeman Wills Crofts is the undisputed dean of the alibi mechanicians, Mr. King is well forward. Furthermore, he has two related crimes to clear up—the murder of a great Egyptologist's widow, Mrs. Timothy, and that of Elisha Spingler, a co-worker of the late Doctor Timothy. When the vorpal blades go snicker-snack Michael Lord, a New York Police Inspector, and his close friend, Doctor Pons, an "integrative psychologist," are luckily present in the musty residence-museum to apprehend the arrogant slayer. It all adds up to an ingenious, carefully planned, and highly literate tale for the advanced student in literary detection.

Speaking of that old master in crime, Freeman Wills Crofts, behold! here he is with an excellent yarn for adult minds, *Antidote to Venom* (Dodd, Mead, $2). The story is different in manner and approach from *The Cask*—indeed, it is a detective story written backwards, somewhat in the manner of the tales in Austin Freeman's *The Singing Bone.* But for all its patent heterodoxy, it ranks high in the current output. Viper venom causes the death of Professor Burnaby; but, the fiendish subtlety of the murderer notwithstanding, our old friend, Inspector French of Scotland Yard, does an excellent bit of deduction. Here is a masterpiece of its kind, wherein the reader has no temptation to turn to the last page because the author lets him in on the secret long before the doughty Inspector arrives. But don't let that innovation prejudice you.

Greetings and a hearty welcome to Margaret Erskine, a newcomer in the mystery field. *The Limping Man* (Doubleday, Doran, $2) is a well-written, well-constructed document, far superior to the usual thriller. Despite its overemphasis on the eerie and the legendary, I commend the book, and hopefully await future forays into crime by the same author. —S. S. Van Dine

Bone Joe and the Smokin' Woman

(continued from page 47)

produce down, war mortgages coming due, ex-service men out of work, and everybody looking for a whipping boy, somebody to blame. But thoughts of half-soles and sugar and flour in Bills Pocket shut out the world as surely as its ring of hills stood against the far sky. They might sell the place, have a five-hundred-dollar debt left over, no home, and no carfare to Nickie's old job in New York. And even when he could work steady, it wasn't much. If they stayed here his white skin might darken, his body grow stronger, his heart pound less. And Hippy needn't be weaned off the range.

By the time baby Diane was six months old, Hortense was back in overalls, much like all the other summers out here. But this time it wasn't play, this time she was out showing a hired man where to break up spring sod for a big garden, a plot of potatoes, sweet corn, and an acre of white beans against the doctor's bills and the undertaker's. She watched the man closely, for after this there would be no money for help.

Evenings, she worked out the plantings with Hippy, crippled up with rheumatism, not getting around much in damp weather any more, and talking as though he hadn't been limping for thirty years. But even in a wheel chair, Hippy would be handy as a silver dollar.

Sometimes, after a good day, Nickie sang a gay little song or two that his mother had taught him, his mother who died wishing for her native Pyrenees. Sometimes he played a little, too, Chopin or Debussy, reaching out suddenly to pull Hortense from her sewing to the piano bench. Her hands were clumsy now, and calloused, but she learned not to object, since the time Nickie snatched up his cap and ran out into the night.

"I can't bear to see these things happening to you," he cried out to the darkness when Hortense came to bring him in from the cold. And although he sat quietly enough the rest of the evening, his heart pounded like Hippy's hammer on the old plowshare.

He couldn't do much heavy work, but with all the new-turned breaking handy, he finally got a sod fireplace and chimney up at the far end of the living room, snaking the blocks into place with the old pinto that once carried Hortense over all the hills. Well-plastered, inside and out, with alkali mud, it was nice for the long evenings. They made a party of the first fire, and a poem.

But Nickie knew such things wouldn't buy so much as a box of matches or a pound of sugar and so he tried desperately to learn to be helpful outside. Without money for coal and with almost no trees in the country, he became

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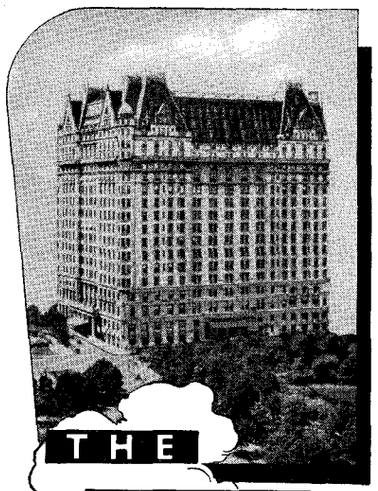
the fuel provider of Bills Pocket, vice-president in charge of cow chips as he called it. During the summer he dotted the old feed grounds west of the valley with neat little cocks to be hauled in when the team was free. The land belonged to Joe Leems now, and several times he drove around that way to see the cow-chip picker Tensy Bills had married. But Nickie just waved his hand in greeting and dragged his old tub on.

In spite of all the care and hoeing Hortense could give to her gardening, the first years didn't yield much for sale except sweet corn and potatoes, the surer crops. One September an early frost blackened half her beans, making a long job of sorting for winter evenings. Next, the hail took all the early planting, pounding the melon vines into the ground. Then the drought. Yet they managed, even paid a little on the debts, until the fall Nickie got sick.

One cold fall day he stayed out cow-chip picking through a slow drizzle that chilled him completely before Hortense came to the hill to call. Scolding that he hadn't hurried home to get dry, she held his hand under the warm sleeve of her jacket, his fingers ice against her side, until she couldn't stand it any longer. Yet as soon as she started to run she remembered and tried to slow down, but Nickie jogged right along to the crest of the road turning into Bills Pocket. Puffing a little, he stopped to point ahead for Hortense to see. Across from them, the smoke of Hippy's baking spread in a thin blue haze along the hills, while over it the breaking clouds of evening hung in yellow folds, burning the windows of their home to a golden light. In a flood of happiness Hortense pressed her cheek to Nickie's wet coat as he held her against him. Then she hurried him along the wet road to the house.

That night Nickie was restless and by morning he was feverish and sick. Two days later it was pneumonia, with Hortense having to admit to the doctor that he had been refused by the army—wet lungs and an unreliable heart.

It was late spring before Nickie was out again, keeping to the sunny side of the house pretty much of the time, with a knitted scarf crossed over his chest, the skin of his high, thin nose stretched tight and shiny. By this time Hortense showed the strain of the winter-long nursing, even with all the help Hippy, limping around on a cane, could give. While Nickie was still only a long skeleton under the blankets, little Diane came down with the whooping cough, and the doctor, not paid out yet for Cap Bills' illness, needed money. Hortense picked



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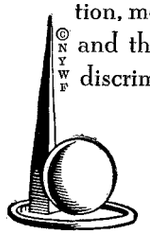

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over the screenings of her beans, sold her hens and the potatoes, down to the barest necessities, even the calf she had hoped to hold for a couple of years. She looked through Nickie's writing once more, and without hope used up the last of her stamps sending the poems out. Half a dozen were accepted, bringing in fifteen dollars and a half, all in one mail. That was a grand, happy evening with a little music not too badly played.

But finally Hortense had to mortgage Bills Pocket, even though to her it meant giving the bank her home. By her twenty-seventh birthday she was looking pretty sprangly, as Hippy called it, with here and there a wiry thread of gray creeping through her dark hair.

Even now Nickie tried to write a little, a pad of paper always beside him, the desperate need of Bills Pocket a shadow about his bowing shoulder. More and more he wrote of the things he was leaving behind, soil and air and sky, a salty old friend, a daughter that he could never kiss again, a woman long and deeply loved.

And then one day Hortense ran to the old car and tried frantically to start it. Failing, she ran to the ridge road to wave down the first passer-by, send him hurrying for a telephone.

The doctor came in time to pull the sheet up over the white face of the poet, waxy as the soapweed blossoms Hortense had brought to him from the hills that morning.

And when the doctor was gone, Hortense threw an old denim jumper around the girl and, with her arm about the shaking little shoulder, went up the road to where it turned into Bills Pocket. There, off to the west, was the old feed ground where, two years before, Nickie had stayed out in the cold rain because he was so anxious to be of help. Together they had looked toward the little house, with its blue smoke clinging to the hill behind it, the clouds of evening turning the windows to gold. Once more the woman felt the rough, wet cold of Nickie's coat against her cheek, knew the loud thumping of his laboring heart.

And now she must explain death to his child.

XI

WHEN the six months of mourning were up, Bone Joe and his driver stopped beside the garden patch where Hortense was going through the tomato vines bowed to the earth with reddening fruit. At the sound of the car the woman stopped and rose stiffly, her gunny-sack apron heavy before her as Joe Leems came uncertainly through the patch, trying to keep out of the down vines with his new shoes.

"Howdy, Tensy," he said.

"Nice day," she told him.

"Yeh—" opening his mouth several times, closing it, and finally starting, "Yeh, Tensy, I guess maybe I could let you have a house in town cheap—"

"Thank you, but we'll be all right here," she said.

The man pushed the sand around a little with a shoe and finally lifted his eyes to the strong woman figure before him, the leather brown of her face, her high, fine nose.

Once more he started. "Maybe I could let you have a little extra on the place—"

"We're better off here—"

That brought the red to his neck. "You can't go on a-living here like you been doin', with a busted-down cow cook—"

A long time the woman looked at the little man before her, once even started to lift her hand against him, knowing he was no match for her field arm. But behind the things she had suffered from him she remembered his own life-long indignities. She had upset his wagon, pushed herself into his dugout, brought him long ridicule with that matrimonial-paper advertisement. She had helped sing the bone picker's song, make a fool of him at a box social. Anger was not her right, and so she thanked the man for his interest and turned back to her work. But when the car pulled out of the yard, Tensy Bills looked after it a long time, her hand shading her eyes uneasily.

She was right. Bone Joe had other ways of persuasion. One rainy evening there was a pounding on the door at Bills Pocket. Hortense put aside her mending and went to the door. In the rectangle of light before her stood three white-robed men, a smallish one in the middle, a wide, husky one on each side, and behind them, across the farther fringe of light, was a solid white wall.

The woman started to close the door, but one of the men poked a rifle against it. They were not here to trouble her, he said, but to protect her from a wolf, a human wolf.

"Yes, a human wolf," the other big fellow added. "We've come for him," thumbing toward the crippled man in his chair beside the lamp.

Hortense looked slowly from one masked face to another and back to the little man in the middle. So that was it. Smiling a little, with the light behind her, she reached as though for support to the door casing. Swiftly she grasped

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the twenty-two rifle hanging beside it, threw the gun to her shoulder, holding the barrel down upon the little man in the center, directly between the holes of his mask, her hand steady and cold.

"Now get out!" she said. "Get out, you dirty, bone-picking buzzards!"

A moment they were motionless, then there was a shift forward among those in the shadow, but the center man waved them back from him. Slowly they obeyed, until they were only a vague patch of white in the darkness, the leader scuttling into their shelter. Then, even before they were gone, Hortense set the gun down, and leaving the door wide open, she went to the table, to sit there at her work, until all the cars were gone and the last of the robed men.

It was Hippy who spoke first, from the shadows of his sunken face.

"You mighta let them bastards take these here old bones a mine," he said, in disgust at his helplessness.

Swiftly the woman was beside him. She tucked the robe in around him and slapped his arm.

"We wouldn't let those bed-sheet paraders take so much as a pants button away from a Bills. And anyway, your bones aren't bleached worth a cent—"

Somehow the story got out, was repeated around the barns, the hardware stores, and the pool halls. By golly, that Tensy Bills was the daughter of old Cap, all right, old Cap who bluffed them horse thieves out up to Wyoming and fetched back all their take. Soon after that, when the Sula girl got in trouble, the new district judge told Bone Joe right out that he was a bird of prey, and the county-seat paper came out against him and his night riders both, without apology. Times seemed to be getting pretty good.

Since Hortense laid Nickie's writing pad away in her trunk, she carried a lantern at both ends of the day. With Hippy sitting in his chair to tell her what to do, she repaired the old car, put a big box on behind, and on spring mornings she was the first at the Gaylor back doors, neat in starched calico or denim, with fresh rhubarb and asparagus, later radishes, lettuce, gooseberries, and so on, until melon and squash time.

In the afternoons Tensy worked with the ditching that brought a little water from the lake to the lower part of her cabbage patch, or hoed, weeded, and gleaned for the next morning. Gradually Bills Pocket became what the real-estate agents called a garden spot, and they began to bring their prospects around that way to show them what the country would grow. But they didn't say that Tensy Bills had learned to watch the romping of her calf and the fluttering whirl of snowbirds for storms, the first coming of the swallow to her eaves to date the season.

The first bad year in Bills Pocket, Hippy had insisted that they buy a shoat and fatten it on scraps, garden truck, and sweet-corn leavings. Cheapest meat in the world, and smoked up, was always handy for the frying pan. So Hortense consented, writing to Vangie's mother where she had tasted ham and side meat cured with the molasses and herb mixture of the old smokin' man of the community and smoked with his secret prep'ration. The recipe for the prep'ration finally came, written out with a stub pencil on a paper sack by the smokin' man himself. After that, there was always good meat, well cured, in the dry sand cave against the hill.

That summer, Ned Salzer and his young wife snapped off a car axle in a sand pass and walked to Bills Pocket to be taken home in the old topless pick-up. While they rested and cooled off, Tensy set out a lunch. At first, Lillibelle just poked at the cold sliced ham, looking around at the bare little house, with nothing much but a square piano and an oil painting of a pale young woman with a harp. But when she finally tasted a bit, at the urging of old Ned, who ate zestfully with knife and fork, she found it nice, yes, quite nice. And so, finally, she suggested that, since it would soon be fall meat-making time and that what they seemed to have was just yellowing dried salt pork, suppose this—this woman came over to do the meat curing?

Ned Salzer turned red all down his bald streak behind, but without seeming to notice, Hortense refilled his coffee cup and said she would be very grateful for the opportunity.

Late that evening old Ned drove back to Bills Pocket and made his stiff, bow-legged way to Hortense watering her cabbage. He had come to say that Lillibelle didn't mean nothing today She just didn't know. Why, Cap Bills had given him his start in stock, let him have cows on shares, and lent him haying tools, way back thirty-five years ago. And now her asking his daughter to come over like a hired woman—

But Hortense insisted that she would be glad to come. It might be a start of something, especially if they liked the meat. Might start a little business for her.

So Tensy Bills, the smokin' gal of ten years ago, became the smokin' woman, busy for weeks in the early spring and

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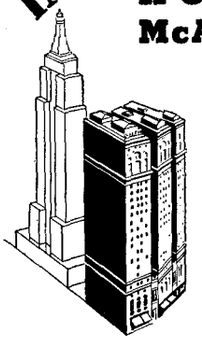

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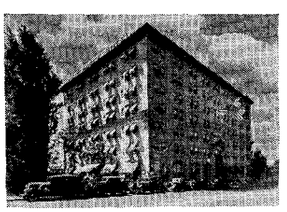

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some in the fall too, swinging around the ranches and the stock farms, cutting up new pork, unjointing a ham with a twist of her knife and her strong wrist, sawing the head in two like so much wood, putting down the clean, firm meat well-rubbed with salt and the brown mixture of her jug.

By the time Diane was nine, times were getting hard again, so desperately hard that even the few ranchers left were curing their meat themselves. But Hortense and Hippy kept up the fiction of security pretty well around Diane. Not that either believed in rearing house plants, but there was no denying the girl was timid. She had even been afraid of the little brown-eyed collie Ned Salzer sent over for her sixth birthday, so afraid they gave the dog back.

Because it was eight miles to school, Tensy got a set of books from the district and a course of study, and taught the girl herself. Perhaps it was better so, better than exposing the reticent child to the taunts her made-over clothes and her isolation would bring her.

At night, when the supper dishes were done and a few sticks of chokecherry wood or a handful of silvery sage were on the fire, Diane played over the day's lesson, played so well that Tensy Bills longed to send her away to study with her own teacher Kozal, who would bring out all the sensitiveness of the girl, her delicacy, and develop the power and strength the mother believed lay latent in the slim young body. A scholarship might be managed, but she could never hope to pay the fare and the living expenses of the girl.

These things were never spoken of before Diane, though she grew long, and skinny as a horseweed.

XII

When Diane was twelve, her mother made her a new gingham dress, pretty green and blue plaid, and took her up to Gaylor for the eighth-grade examinations. As they passed the bank, Joe Leems came out. Tensy Bills nodded and went on, but she knew that he stopped to look after them, after the straight young Diane as he had after the mother twenty-five years before. He was clean now, even in the deepest checks of his wrinkled neck, but it was still the same.

While she was trading out the last of her asparagus, Lesper Killey, Joe's bookkeeper, came whispering that Mr. Leems would see her in his bank office right away. But Tensy Bills didn't go, and so the next day the man came out to the Pocket to offer the woman a house once more. She could keep right on with her smokin' work, and the girl could go to high school. He had heard her play as he went by the place at night, sometimes. Maybe—why, maybe she could learn to play pretty good, even good enough for his moving-picture show.

Although Hortense Bills refused with friendliness enough, she leaned on her hoe until the Pocket was quiet and clean again, and all the dust had settled on the Gaylor road.

The next day a string of machinery and wagons, long as a threshing crew on the move, crept down the road into the pocket below Tensy's line. Here it broke up, and before noon a ditching machine was eating into the earth, cutting a deep trench along the fence that crossed the lower end of the little lake, piling up a high ridge along the far side. From the protection of her old shed Hortense watched, knowing that it was to draw her water away, dry out her little valley, her bit of lake and her irrigation ditches, destroy her alfalfa and her fine garden.

Then she saw Diane come in from her flower picking in the hills, running to see this new thing near her home, and so Hortense had to leave the shed, with Bone Joe there to see, and walk calmly to the house. In the doorway she stopped. Hippy had hitched his chair to the window and across his knees was the old Bills rifle.

"It ain't heavy enough to carry clear down there nohow," the man complained in disgust as Hortense took the gun from him. "But some day I'll get that buzzard from clost—"

Before the middle of August the lake was a cracking stretch of gray mud, with only a few green-scummed pools down the center. Below the fence the Leems ditch carried a steady little flow of seepage water to the winding creek bed, usually dry long before this.

Hortense considered digging a ditch across the entire lower end of the valley, deep enough to cut the seepage table and fill it with alkali mud, tamped and dried into hardpan. But that would take months, and she had to save every pound of tomatoes, every head of cabbage now, with prices down to nothing. So she carried water from the pump late into the nights, a bucket in each hand.

As the depression deepened, the best land in the region, land he had long waited for, fell into the hands of Joe Leems like wild plums, ripe and sweet. Busy with these things he let his ditch fill with Russian thistles and mud until the water started to lay in the lower end of Tensy's lake again, and creep toward the old irrigation ditches, even

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with the rains slow and the winter black. In town it was said that Bone Joe was buying purple pajamas, keeping a red-headed girl up at the hotel, and walking big as when he used to lead the long, white-robed parade.

When Joe Leems took over the second county-seat bank, he began foreclosing again. Here and there an old-timer discovered that the galluses of his tattered overalls were still stout enough for a noose. But others were discovering that a common calamity becomes a common bond, and talked of organizing and rioting like in the papers, with delegations to march on the State Capitol. Lesper Killey came to tell Joe Leems that there might be rough stuff, knucks and shooting, with mobs breaking up his sheriff sales But the foreclosure notices appeared, pages at a time, and knots of dark-faced men began to gather wherever Bone Joe was.

So Joe stayed in his hotel room and kept Lesper Killey running back and forth with a brief case. But across the street from his window a row of men still waited, the February wind whipping their thin old overalls

The first sale scheduled was Bills Pocket. Ned Salzer came down to see Hippy about it, the two old cowhands sitting in the window with the sandbox between them. There'd been talk of holding up Tensy's sale, Ned said, a little talk, but not enough. Too many was a-looking on it like a grudge fight between the old bone picker and the Billses, and more had women folks who thought of Tensy as that high-flyin' smokin' gal, or that old smokin' woman.

"Yeh." Hippy shot a pale little splatter into the sandbox and wiped his mouth. "Little fellows a-fightin' amongst theirselves over matchsticks while the big fellows steals their pants—"

For the first time in her life Tensy Bills was unable to plan so much as a shelter in the wind for her two. The morning of the sale there was no gasoline, and so she walked the two miles of gray March prairie to the grave of Rutherford Bills and was glad that he hadn't lagged too long after his time. It was at the unmarked spot beside him, where Nickie lay, that Hortense stood so still, a lone bowed figure, with no moving thing anywhere in sight.

If she hadn't come out of the West and taken Nickie from his little publishing-house job into this hard environment, he would be alive, writing words that would bring to others the beautiful things his eyes saw, his heart knew. But it had seemed so right to them, their coming together, right and beautiful as the wind and the sun they found on the slopes of their little home.

Wearily the woman started back, through the winter-bleached grass, the chill gray sky low about her. Then, far out on the road, Diane came running, crying, jumping up and down about her mother, whirling her in a witches' dance. Oh, no, it wasn't Hippy. It was a boy, a fine big boy who had come riding, bringing news. There was a farm-mortgage moratorium. Their place wouldn't be sold today.

Suddenly Hortense understood and dropping to the grass, dizzy, looked up at her daughter. "Child, child," she cried, only now realizing that she hadn't spared the girl anything at all.

But the moratorium was true, and so that night they used the last of the sugar to make a plate of fudge and stayed up until the lamp went dry. Early the next morning, Hortense walked across her garden ground, her plow shoes sinking into the warming earth, dark, frost-mellowed, and rich. With her fingers she cleared aside a bit of the old hay covering the rhubarb, and called aloud for Diane. Together they dug deeper into the covering, bearing the first hard knuckles of the pieplant pushing through, young and pink, pink as a pretty girl's dress. Then arm in arm they went to the house to put on the coffee, to bring out all the seed catalogues Tensy had hidden from Hippy and herself as they came. Now they would look them through, everyone, plan for another spring.

Joe Leems took the mortgage moratorium hard, and talked of going into politics at last. The country was run by a lot of Reds, taking a man's liberty away, cheating him out of his rightful property, out of things he'd worked years for. Yeh, that was right enough, old-timers admitted. Bone Joe'd sure been working to bust the Billses for twenty-five years.

A test case was started, but it might be years before it reached the Supreme Court. Until then, so long as the interest and taxes were paid up, Tensy's place was safe. So she dug in harder than ever, planted more sweet corn, more beans, and with the first five dollars she took Hippy to the doctor to give his joints some relief.

Farm prices went up a little, but the reluctant summer rains barely splattered the fields, and the winter earth lay bare and gray. Although the dust storms that filled the papers with alarming stories were seldom more than a red haze on the evening sun, the water table of the region was falling, the seepage springs of Bills Pocket no more than a wet spot on the

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outcroppings of sandstone by August. Gradually the grass moved in on the little lake until a bit of rushes in the middle was all that remained where ducks once swam over six feet of water.

When things were pretty thin, the thinnest they had ever been, because now the interest had to be paid on the dot, a woman came out and Hortense discovered that Hippy had applied for old-age pension.

At that, Hortense Bills left the house, and when she finally came back into the lamp light of the supper table, Hippy saw the first sign of tears on her face since the day, almost thirty years before, when he told her some of the things she needed to know. But the woman was calm now, listening sensibly to the practical side of the arrangement. It would be about fifteen dollars a month—the difference between enough to eat and not enough, particularly for Diane and for herself. "You got to feed a plow horse," Hippy pointed out. It would keep the interest and taxes paid, a roof against the sun.

XIII

SPRING was back once more, with wind and seed catalogues and interest due. Before the heavy work was upon her, Hortense overhauled the old car, tightening the connecting rods until she couldn't turn the engine over and had to hitch up the team to start it. But today the air lay moist and still, early geese honked high overhead somewhere, and in the garden the parsnip rows were sprouting their first tips of green. Shouting a good-by to Hippy at the window, Hortense started the car off toward Gaylor and the bank. And as she drove, she hummed a little, for the motor ran sweet and in her pocket was every cent of Bone Joe's interest money.

At the hill line she waved back to Diane. The girl was fanning alfalfa seed with a screened salt-barrel hoop, tossing the sieve with slim grace, the blue of her calico skirt billowing, the pile of golden seed on the old canvas on the ground gleaming in the sun. Alfalfa prices were coming up a little. One more crop and she could send the girl away. It was time, for she was seventeen and getting valentines from Joe Leems too, just as she had at that age, when she slipped up behind his wagon, scared his horses, and upset his wagon. But Diane could never be the independent flip she had been, and besides, Bone Joe's wheels were running pretty solid these days.

As Hortense neared Gaylor there seemed more cars on the road than usual, and in town there was a crowd, the streets parked solid, knots of men along the walks, standing thick about the bank. Hortense wondered about them, loafing in the middle of a spring week, and without the women folks, their dark faces silent, giving her no more than a nod today, even old acquaintances.

When she finally got parked, Ned Salzer separated himself from the fringe of the crowd and came over to the car. With his foot on the old running board, the sun on his bald head, he told her, keeping his eyes to the battered hat in his hand as he talked. It was the moratorium. Off, thrown out, pronounced unconstitutional by the State Supreme Court. Foreclosures were starting today where they left off five years ago. Several of the old-timers' places already gone.

So that was it. After all the years of skinning hard work, of planning and saving and fighting the man off, now it was all gone like snow before one blast of a chinook. Everything.

A long time the woman sat behind the steering wheel, gripping the bare old wood with her knotted hands, her eyes straight before her, the wind lines at her mouth deep as folds in old gray leather.

"They're a-needin' somebody educated for a few weeks, for the guide book, somebody what can wrangle a little history stuff—" Old Ned started to say. But he didn't finish, for the woman's face gave him no recognition now, drained of all life before his eyes. Touching her arm with an awkward paw, he stumbled away on his bowed old legs.

At last the woman roused to look about her. Lesper Killey was at her shoulder, jerking at the wash-faded denim of her jumper to get her attention.

"The boss'll be up there to see you after a bit," he said, nodding toward the old feed stable.

The woman only shook her head, not at him but at this moment that would be sweet as meadow honey, time-ripened and warm to the tongue of the old bone picker.

But in the end Tensy Bills had to go, to climb the rickety old stairs to the room above the feed store, her heavy feet scarcely lifting her from step to step. Meekly, as one come new to begging, she rapped on the old door and waited, her gray hair blowing from under her hat on the platform in the rising wind, her body thin in its blue denim.

But there was no reply, and after a long time she noticed that men in the street were staring up at her, one of them saying something.

"—He's gone. I saw him drive outa town awhile ago."

So Tensy went back to the car, turned the stiff crank with dull persistence and took the road back to Bills Pocket, Leems Pocket in a day or so now. As she drove she thought once more over all the man's long wait, since she was a girl, a child, much younger than Diane—

Suddenly she pulled the gas feed down, gripping the wheel as the engine roared, hoping that the old boot in the front tire would hold. As she turned off the main road into Bills Pocket she caught the sun on a car drawn up at the shed, a new roadster, like Joe Leems'.

Even before she stopped she saw Diane, white as bone, in the corner of the ell. The girl was flattened hard to the wall, her open palms against the boards. On the ground before her lay a man in a blue-green suit, small as a boy, with one arm thrown out, crumpled and gray and old.

Jerking the car to a screeching stop, the woman ran to her daughter, held her close and looked down upon the man. It was Bone Joe, with a dark little bullet hole in his temple, his open eyes skinning over with gray, like a dead bird's.

Inside the window Hippy sat in his chair, his slack jaw moving slowly, his fingers like claws on the old rifle across his knees.

Life in the U. S. . . Photographic—Vermont

(*see page 30*)

1. FULL MOON, by H. H. Robie, Lyndonville, Vt. These houses are part of a group built seventy years ago for people who attended an annual Methodist camp meeting in Lyndonville. Taken at 10 P.M. with no light but that of a full moon. Graflex camera; 5 min. exposure.

2. IN RUTLAND COUNTY, by Anton Kamp, c/o Black Star Publishing Co., 420 Lexington Avenue, New York. Taken on a sunny day near Wallingford. Rolleiflex 2¼ x 2¼ camera; 1/50 sec. exposure at f11; yellow filter; Eastman Panatomic film; developed in D-76.

3. BACK ROAD, by Aldo Merusi, Rutland, Vt. Members of a boot-and-saddle club on a trail ride. Speed Graphic camera; 1/110 sec. exposure at f8; Agfa Superpan Press film; developed in Agfa 125.

4. WEST WIND, by Adelaide P. Fuller, 400 East Fifty-ninth Street, New York. Mrs. Fuller was photographing a church near Craftsbury when she turned around and saw this behind her. Rolleiflex 3.5 camera; 50 sec. exposure at f11; No. 2 filter; Agfa Superpan Press film.

5. INDIAN WOODCUTTER, by Aldo Merusi. Taken in the hills near Danby, this shows one of the young Iroquois Indians employed for this work because of their resistance to the summer heat. Speed Graphic camera; 1/110 sec. exposure at f4.5; Agfa Superpan Press film; developed in Agfa 125.

6. MAIN STREET, by Burt Foster, Rutland, Vt. Made during the first appearance of the new Rutland fire truck in a Fourth of July parade. Speed Graphic camera; 1/110 sec. exposure at f8; Defender XF pan film; developed in D-76.

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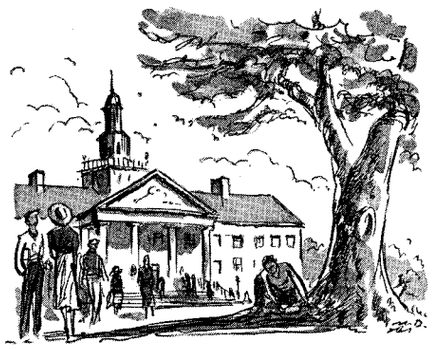

Man of Many Words

The late Dr. Frank H. Vizetelly, renowned lexicographer and author of a score of books on the English language, could not read until he was eleven years old, and received his early education in France.

He was born in London in 1864, of a family engaged for five generations in writing, editing, engraving, printing, and publishing. His father was a publisher and journalist who, when the boy was very young, went to France as correspondent for the London *News*. Frank went along, but was unable to go to school. Frail and almost sightless, he had to wear black leather blinders with small pin-hole lenses in them, and was not allowed to read until an operation restored his vision in 1875. But then he read with a vengeance, and graduated high in his class from the Lycée Baudard at Nugent-sur-Marne.

Returning to England, he attended Brighton, then transferred to Arnold College, where he stayed until 1880.

For the next ten years he worked in his father's publishing firm. When it closed down after publishing what the Victorian English considered a lascivious translation of Zola's *La Terre*, Frank Vizetelly came to America. His first job was with Funk & Wagnalls, and he became editor of their dictionary in 1912.

Education of a Spy

Some people rebel against the discipline of formal education. We should like to pass on to them some information we found in a book called *Secret Life of a Secret Agent*, by Henry W. Lanier. In the —— Intelligence Service training school, according to Mr. Lanier, prospective agents are required to learn the following:

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houses, gas plants, water supply, dams, bridges, tunnels, and food warehouses; also topography and other details about the surrounding country—rivers, mountain passes, roadways, army posts, fortifications, munitions works, steel plants, oil supplies, mines, and factories. All this to be memorized exactly.

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Quotation of the Month

"The education of the twentieth century, which will fit our children to live in their human world, should concern itself with developing the social imagination of the child if it wishes our civilization to go forward. . . . This implies that fundamental information concerning our world must be given to the child as material upon which his imagination may work."—Professor Charles A. Ellwood in *The Journal of the N.E.A.*

—R. B.

Answers to "Bethlehem Quiz"

(See page 39)

1. (d) A kind of steel pipe used in the drilling of oil wells. Bethlehem International Corporation, with headquarters at Tulsa, will distribute thousands of tons of seamless casing in the oil country this year.

2. (c) A steel rod used in oil well pumping.

3. (c) A felloe is the outer rim of the wheel proper.

4. (d) Barbed wire is occasionally purchased by the mile for fencing on ranches.

5. (b) Abrasion resisting plate is a steel of special hardness used in mining where there is unusual friction, as in chutes.

6. (c) Ammonium sulphate. This product usually is sold through wholesalers and dealers, because of the large tonnages involved at the point of production.

7. (b) Ferdinand, the Bull.

8. (e) Wire nails for boxing.

9. (a) Slag.

10. Bethlehem Steel Company.

(Advertisement)

The Scribner Quiz — Answers

(see page 28)

1. Expense (2)
2. Racing stables (2)
3. "He loved the Lyme light" (2)
4. Commerce (5)
5. Electric motors (4)
6. The home of Vice-President Garner (1)
7. 850 (3)
8. A San Francisco parade bombing (3)
9. Stanley Baldwin (4)
10. Celebrate baseball's centennial (3)
11. Wilson [56] (2)
12. Abraham Lincoln (2)
13. Passing the time away (3)
14. An island in San Francisco Bay (4)
15. Vice-president with Samuel Goldwyn, Inc. (3)
16. Precocial (2)
17. Friendly, good-neighborly relations (1)
18. The cage (3)
19. 64 [eight each way] (3)
20. Terp-SICK-oh-ree [the muse of dancing] (1)
21. Shoes (3)
22. National Assoc. of Manufacturers (4)
23. Lace blouse edging (2)
24. Tunisia [French protectorate] (3)
25. Cattle (4)
26. Victor Hugo (3)
27. Viewing the interior of the stomach (2)
28. Harrington (4)
29. An old man (3)
30. Tooth decay (3)
31. Yellowstone Park [a geyser] (4)
32. France (1)
33. Douglas Corrigan (4)
34. Curved steel spikes on their spurs (1)
35. Territory in East Africa (1)
36. Heading N. Y. City's Planning Commission (2)
37. Churches (1)
38. Lexicographers [a compiler of a dictionary] (4)
39. South Carolina — Columbia (5)
40. Spends freely in fast living (1)
41. A new Steinway (5)
42. Constructing the Suez Canal (3)
43. He is living in Italy (2)
44. Ordinary citizen's dress (3)
45. Belgium (5)
46. Aberdeen-Angus (3)
47. Lay eggs in order to reproduce (3)
48. A fine, closely woven cotton fabric (2)
49. Richard Whitney should be retried (1)
50. Fairly long, very flat, and broad (2)

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